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ABSTRACT

This monograph, which describes the vocational education and training (VET) system in the United Kingdom, is a step towards updating and extending the series on VET in the member states of the European Community. Chapter 1 provides background information on: political and administrative structure; population; the economy and labor force; educational levels of the population and labor force; and employment and skill needs. Chapter 2 describes briefly the education system and its development, including the education departments, local authorities, secondary education, higher education, teacher training, and educational research. Chapter 3 covers the VET system's historical development, common elements for initial and continuing VET, initial VET, and continuing VET. Chapter 4 presents the regulatory framework. It discusses administrative and regulatory arrangements and financial arrangements. Chapter 5 covers qualitative aspects, including certification and the qualifications and training of trainers. Chapter 6 focuses on: social and economic trends and a change of government. Annexes include a list of acronyms and sets of initials; major organizations involved in providing or regulating vocational training; a 37-item bibliography; glossary; and further proposed changes to the VET infrastructure. (YLB)

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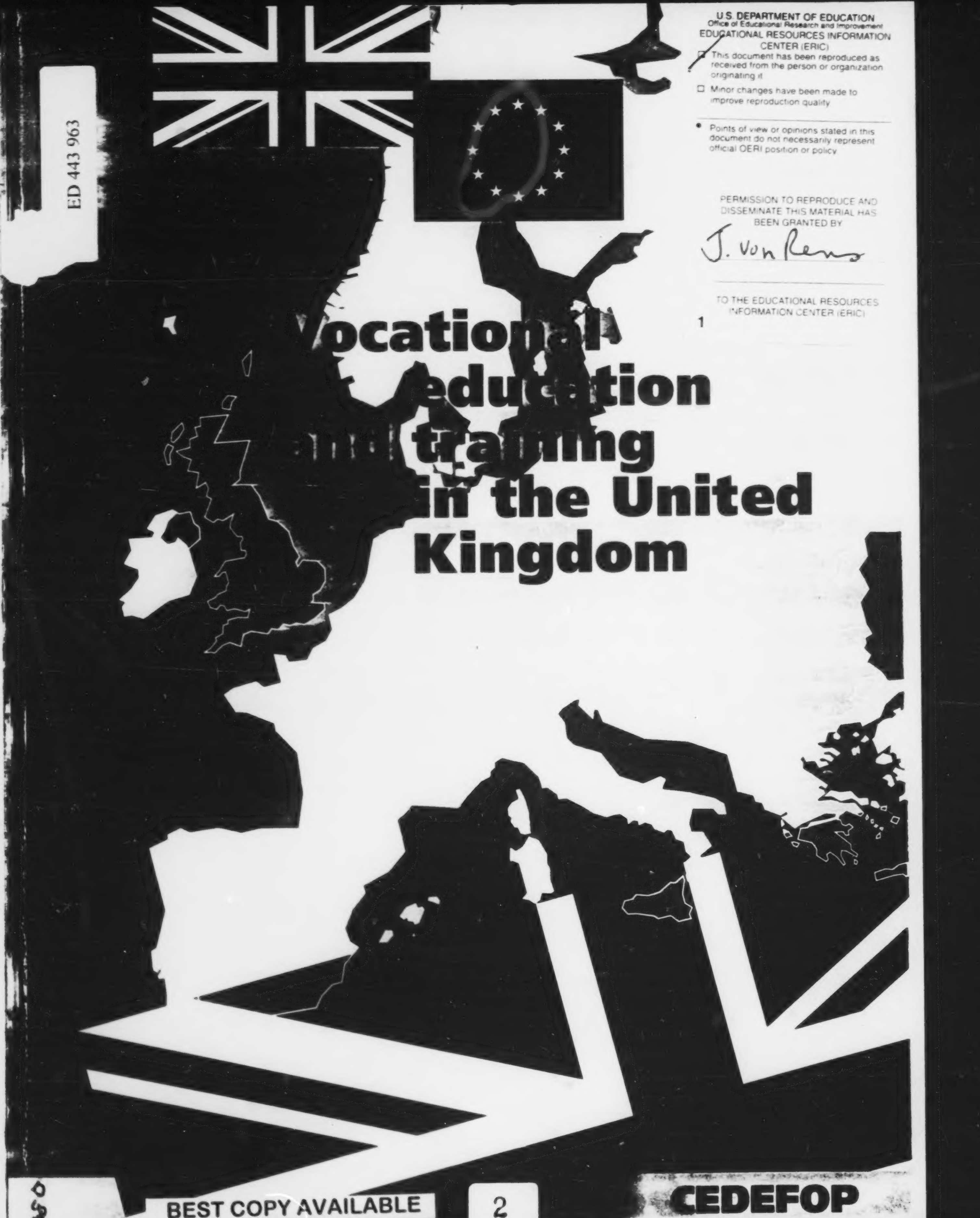

Vocational education and training in the United Kingdom

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CEDEFOP

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Vocational education and training in the United Kingdom

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CEDEFOP introduction

Objective and target groups
The publication of this description of the vocational education and training system in the United Kingdom is a step towards up-dating and extending the series of descriptions of the (then 12) Member States published by CEDEFOP between 1993 and 1996. The series now includes Austria, Sweden and Finland and the countries covered by the European Economic Area (EEA) agreement. The objective is to present an overview of vocational education and training activities in the United Kingdom so that it is easily understood by interested "foreigners". The target group includes those who may be responsible for, and concerned with, VET policy issues, researchers in this field, directors of vocational training departments or institutions, and trainers and teachers, whether they work at EU or Member State level, or for a governmental or social partner organisation. Some may be using the text at their desks as a reference document, others may be visiting the country concerned either on a study visit or to plan or execute a bi- or multi-lateral project and more likely to wish to read the document from beginning to end.

Content and structure
The volumes in this series set out to describe initial and continuing vocational education and training (VET). As far as initial VET is concerned this means including provision which is in some cases the responsibility of Ministries for Education and in others of Ministries of Employment or Social Affairs. As far as continuing VET is concerned it requires coverage of provision for both the employed and unemployed, usually by a wide range of governmental bodies and ministries, by private and social partner organisations.

The structure of the report (see the list of contents) has been laid down in some detail by CEDEFOP, which has also placed limits on how long it should be. This is to make it easier for readers to make comparisons between the training systems in various EU Member States. The structure is, in general terms, similar to that adopted for the reports on the Member States commissioned in 1992, but there have been some changes such as the addition of a chapter on what we have called "qualitative aspects", including information on certification, training of trainers and guidance. We are requiring the authors of all monographs, including those updating the existing ones, to follow this amended structure, so as to facilitate readers who wish to try to make comparisons between the systems.

Choice of author and consultation procedures
For this series CEDEFOP has tried to achieve a product which in some ways is impossible. We wished to have a report written by an insider of the system concerned, but easily comprehensible to the outsider. It followed that the person/institution chosen as an author is an insider, located in the country being described and, unless they choose not to do so, writing in their mother tongue. A further corollary of this was that CEDEFOP has tried to play the role of "outsider" in discussions on the draft text, in order to draw authors' attention to places where the report was likely not to be easily understood by the public for which it is intended.

CEDEFOP has also stipulated that the authors must carry out a consultation on the draft with the main parties involved in VET in their country. This has meant their sending the draft not only to the various public bodies responsible for organising the system and providing VET, but also to the principal representative bodies of the social partners. The assistance of the members of the CEDEFOP's Management Board in the country concerned has in particular being requested in this connection.

Publishing and up-dating

It is CEDEFOP's intention, as long as the necessary resources are available, to publish these monographs in paper form in their original language and in English, French and German. In occasional and exceptional circumstances it may publish some monographs in additional languages. Experience has however shown that the time-scale involved in translating and publishing in hard copy form and the rate of change in the systems described means that the reports can almost never be entirely up-to-date. CEDEFOP intends therefore also to use electronic means of publishing, including making summaries and up-dates of the texts available on its interactive Internet site (www.trainingvillage.gr) and the publication of a CD-ROM.

Comments and feed-back

As indicated above, CEDEFOP is conscious that in preparing this series it has had to make choices. We would very much appreciate having readers' views as to whether we have made the right ones concerning the scope, content and structure of the report. We would be pleased to have your comments by letter, fax or e-mail.

Vocational education and training in the United Kingdom

Education and vocational training in the United Kingdom has undergone major and almost continuing changes during an extended period. These changes have often been quite radical, particularly as far as they concern the degree to which, and the means by which, government controls, organises and finances training. There are apparent paradoxes. The tendency for the state to withdraw from the provision of training has been accompanied by greater state intervention in terms of the setting of targets and standards in training and of establishing national curricula in education. Education and training provision are in some ways quite separate and training seems to have relatively low status for young people, yet this (at least in England) is the only country in Europe with an integrated Ministry for Education and Employment with responsibility for virtually all elements of government intervention for education and training. Particularly interesting at present is the move towards decentralisation with increased autonomy for Scotland and Wales, the re-establishment of an elected assembly in Northern Ireland and perhaps, most importantly in terms of impact on education and training, the possible future creation of regional assemblies and administrations in England.

In creating greater flexibility in training systems by the introduction of certification systems which are not based on time spent learning or working, but test competences achieved, the United Kingdom has played a pioneering role, which has been watched carefully by other European countries. Now the very great emphasis, within a framework of lifelong learning, on the mastery of the rapidly developing information and communication technologies, and their use in education and training, is also likely to attract interest from elsewhere.

CEDEFOP is very grateful to John Twining and his colleagues in Guildford Educational Services for the work that they have invested in preparing this document. It has been delayed in order to include some of the changes announced earlier this year, but nevertheless has been written at a time when the impact of these changes is not clear. We think they have succeeded in providing a clear and succinct picture of a system which, in many ways and for some time, has been in a process of continuous change. We hope that readers share our view.

Stavros Stavrou
Deputy Director

J. Michael Adams   Reinhard Nöbauer
Project co-ordinators

Thessaloniki, March 1999

Contents

Author's preface 9

Chapter 1 Background information 13

1.1. Political and administrative structure 13
  1.1.1. The United Kingdom 13
  1.1.4. Government 13
  1.1.15. Education and training 15
  1.1.25 Intermediate agencies 17
1.2. Population 18
1.3. The economy and the labour force 21
  1.3.1 The economy 21
  1.3.2 Gross domestic product (GDP) 21
  1.3.7 Employment and the labour market 23
1.4 Educational levels of the population and labour force 27
1.5 Ethnic minorities 29
1.6 Employment and skill needs 31

Chapter 2 Brief description of the education system and its development 33

2.1 Historical development 33
2.2 Overview of the system 34
2.3 The education departments 34
2.4 Local authorities 35
2.5 Secondary education: England and Wales 36
2.6 Secondary education: Scotland 39
2.7 Secondary education: Northern Ireland 40
2.8 Higher education 41
2.9 Teacher training 43
2.10 Research 43

Chapter 3 The vocational education and training system 47

3.1. Historical development of vocational education and training 47
  3.1.1 Origins 47
  3.1.3 The development of vocational education and training 47
  3.1.8 Professional bodies 48
  3.1.10 Technician qualifications 49
  3.1.11 Training 49
  3.1.13 Government intervention in training 49
  3.1.20 The decline of intervention 51
  3.1.23 Qualifications 52
  3.1.26 Involving industry 52
  3.1.28 Northern Ireland 53

3.2 Common elements for initial and continuing vocational education and training 55
  3.2.1 Introduction 55
  3.2.2 Government responsibility for vocational training 55
  3.2.3 Vision and strategies 55
  3.2.5 Targets 56
  3.2.8 Overview of the vocational training infrastructure 57
  3.2.9 Industrial sectors and occupations 58
  3.2.16 Localisation: TECs and LECs 59
  3.2.20 Delivery of VET 60
  3.2.31 Northern Ireland 63

3.2.35 Guidance 64
3.2.40 Information technology: the National Grid for Learning 65
3.2.44 National Record of Achievement 66
3.2.50 Summary of responsibilities 67

3.3 Initial vocational education and training 69
3.3.1 Overview: Individual options and government strategies 69
3.3.7 Targets 73
3.3.10 Full-time education 74
3.3.12 Modern Apprenticeships 74
3.3.19 National Traineeships 77
3.3.21 Youth Training 77
3.3.31 Youth Credits 79
3.3.33 Part-time vocational education 80
3.3.35 Guidance 80
3.3.39 The New Deal 81
3.3.48 Northern Ireland 84

3.4 Continuing vocational education and training 85
3.4.1 Background 85
3.4.8 Targets 86
3.4.9 Overview 87
3.4.10 The employed 87
3.4.13 Training for the unemployed 90
3.4.20 Small business start up training 91
3.4.26 Continuous professional development 92
3.4.27 Commitment of individuals to learn 93
3.4.34 Adult education 96
3.4.38 Open and flexible learning 96
3.4.54 Public libraries 101
3.4.58 Information technology 102
3.4.60 University for Industry 103
3.4.67 Adult guidance 105
3.4.68 Northern Ireland 105

Chapter 4 - Regulatory and financial framework 107

4.1 Administrative and regulatory arrangements 107
4.1.1 Introduction 107
4.1.6 Legislation 108
4.1.8 Legal personality 109
4.1.11 Regulation 109
4.1.12 Regulation by contract 110
4.1.14 Regulation by inspection 110
4.1.17 Regulation by quality assurance 111
4.1.19 Regulation by charter 111
4.1.20 Regulation by qualifications 111

4.2 Financial arrangements 113
4.2.1 Levels of funding 113
4.2.4 Funding policies 113
4.2.8 Funding arrangements: overview 114
4.2.13 Funding arrangements: further education 116
4.2.16 Funding arrangements: work based training 117
4.2.22 Employer-funded training 117
4.2.25 The University for Industry 119

Chapter 5 - Qualitative aspects 121

5.1 Certification and qualifications 121
  5.1.1 Introduction 121
  5.1.8 The NVQ/SVQ framework 122
  5.1.16 Accreditation 125
  5.1.18 Other qualifications 126
  5.1.24 Setting standards 128
  5.1.27 Awarding bodies 128
  5.1.30 The delivery of NVQs/SVQs and other qualifications 129
  5.1.35 The future 130
  5.1.37 Northern Ireland 131
5.2 Training of trainers 131
5.3 Research 132

Chapter 6 - Trends and perspectives 133

6.1 Social and economic trends 133
  6.1.1 Introduction 133
  6.1.3 Population and employment 133
  6.1.5 The economy and employment 134
  6.1.10 The future of work 135
  6.1.14 The Law of Unintended Consequences 135
6.2 A change of government 136
  6.2.1 Education! Education! Education! 136
  6.2.3 Constitutional change and the infrastructure 136
  6.2.9 The European Union 137
  6.2.11 Visions and their implementation 138
  6.2.15 Information Technology 139
  6.2.17 Collaboration 140
  6.2.20 Resources 141
  6.2.24 Conclusion 142

Annexes

Annex 1 List of acronyms and sets of initials 145
Annex 2 Major organisations involved in providing or regulating vocational training 147
Annex 3 Bibliography 150
Annex 4 Brief glossary of terms 152
Annex 5 Further proposed changes to the VET infrastructure - June 1999 155

Author's preface

This monograph in the CEDEFOP series on vocational education and training in the Member States of the European Community, was initially drafted in late 1996 and early 1997. At that time it was only necessary to make a limited number of important revisions to the earlier monograph written in 1992.

However, as the general election of 1 May 1997 brought in a Labour government after 18 years in opposition, it seemed sensible to delay the completion of the text until their visions, policies and the main lines of implementation were known. This has meant a delay, with the text now reflecting the position in late summer 1998. The new government has made sufficient changes in the general lines of vocational education and training for the earlier draft to require comprehensive rewriting. Although the overall structure of vocational education and training remains the same, initiatives such as the New Deal for the unemployed and the University for Industry are likely to change the overall approach to VET in the UK, and especially to lifelong learning.

I have drawn on a wide range of sources. As in the previous edition of the monograph, for the history of vocational education and training until about 1980, I drew again on *The Evolution of British Manpower Policy* by P.J.C. Perry.

This edition has considerably more statistics than the previous one. Again, these statistics have been derived from many different sources, not all of which are necessarily collecting and presenting data in exactly the same way; nor do they all cover the same years. I have taken the line that the statistics are meant to be illustrative rather than absolute. Those who want to follow up for comparative purposes with other countries would be advised to go back to the source rather than to use my derivations.

In summer 1998, the revised draft was sent to a number of organisations for comment. I am particularly grateful for the comments received from the Department for Education and Employment and from the Training and Employment Agency in Northern Ireland.

The reader is warned, however, that the responsibility for the text is mine. Despite the fact that I have incorporated as many of the comments as I could, this monograph is not an authorised version prepared on behalf of the government of the United Kingdom. In particular *Chapter 6: Trends and Perspectives* reflects my own interpretation of events.

Finally, I should like to express my thanks to Michael Adams at CEDEFOP who encouraged and supported my attempts to explain the complexities of vocational education and training in the UK and who exercised admirable patience as I waited for important new information which needed to be incorporated in this edition.

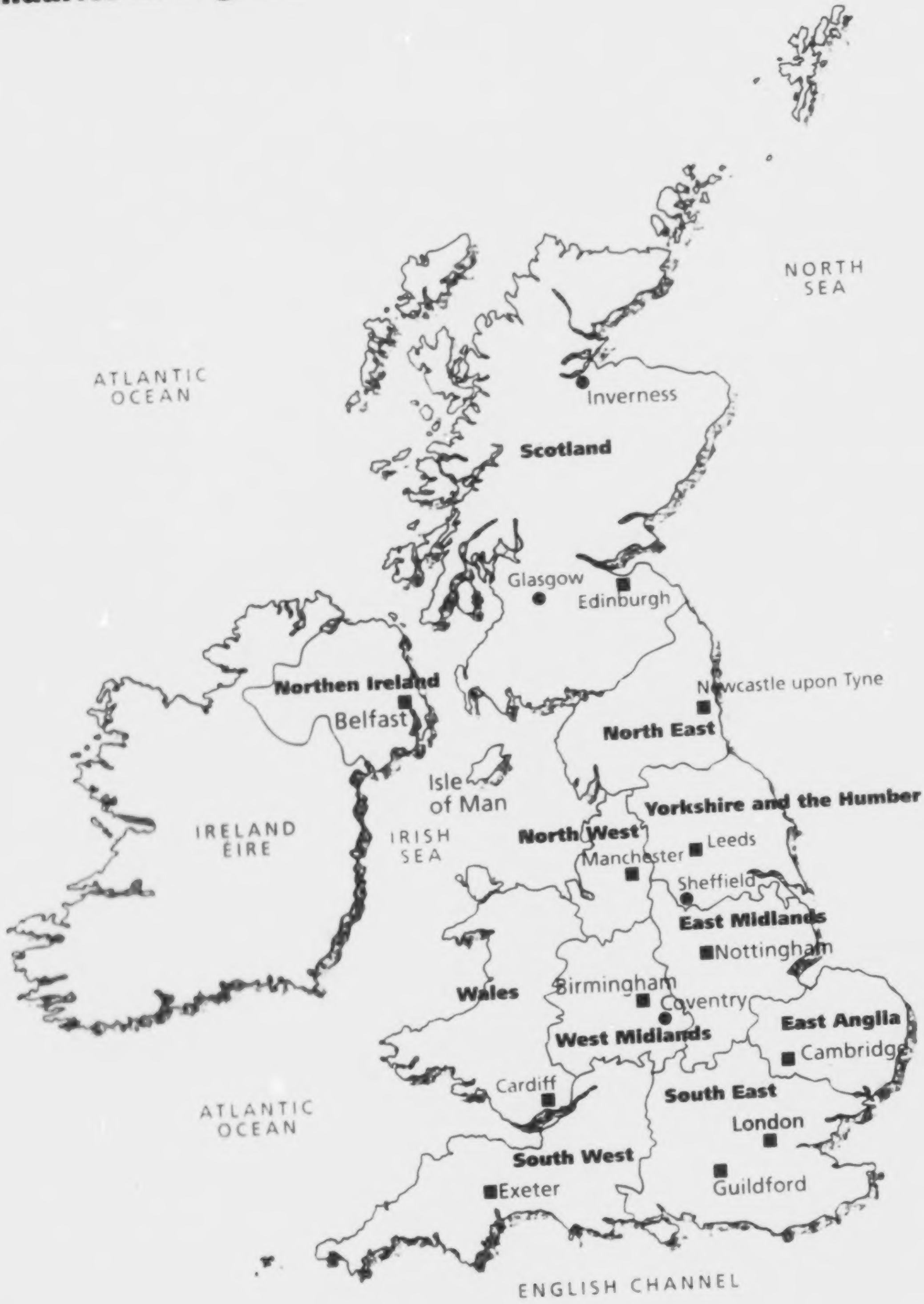
John Twining
December 1998

When this monograph was at proof-reading stage, a government White Paper: *Learning to Succeed* foreshadowed important changes in the infrastructure of vocational education and training. These are summarised in Annex 5.

J.T., August 1999

Vocational education and training in the United Kingdom

The United Kingdom, with Regional Development Agency (RDA) boundaries in England



■ Cities with parliamentary assemblies or with headquarters of a RDA

of importance for VET purposes

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Chapter 1
Background information

1.1 Political and administrative structure

The United Kingdom

1.1.1
The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (normally abbreviated as UK) comprises

- England
- Wales
- Scotland
- Northern Ireland

The Channel Islands and the Isle of Man constitutionally are direct possessions of the Crown and are not part of the UK; they are not covered in this publication.

1.1.2
The order in which these parts of the UK are often listed (as above) reflects the historical order in which there was constitutional union with England. Great Britain technically means England, Wales and Scotland, although it is sometimes (as in GBP for £ Sterling) treated as synonymous with the UK.

1.1.3
There is no symmetry between the component parts of the UK. In the first place their populations differ widely. In broad terms the population of Northern Ireland is just over half that of Wales; the population of Wales is just over half that of Scotland; and the population of Scotland is little more than 10% of that of England.

Government

1.1.4
At present there is a single Parliament for the whole of the UK, with members of the House of Commons all elected in single member constituencies. The House of Lords, with lesser powers, comprises hereditary peers, appointed peers, some bishops and senior judges. The leader of the largest party in the House of Commons becomes Prime Minister and appoints the members of the Cabinet.

1.1.5
The Cabinet, the executive arm of central government, is largely composed of the political heads (Secretaries of State) of the main government departments. There are Secretaries of State for Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland in the Cabinet, but there is no Secretary of State for England.

1.1.6
There is a single legal and judicial system for England and Wales, but separate systems for Scotland and for Northern Ireland.

1.1.7
Government documents for England, Scotland and Northern Ireland are published in English, but those for Wales are bilingual (English and Welsh).

1.1.8

The United Kingdom is divided into local government areas known as Counties or Unitary Authorities. In England the 36 counties are sub-divided into districts creating a 'two tier' local government area. To administer the area a County Council and District Councils are elected. Unitary Authorities are 'single tier' local government areas with no districts. To administer these areas a 'single tier' council is elected. From 1st April 1996 Scotland and Wales were wholly divided into 'single tier' Unitary Authority areas; with 32 in Scotland and 22 in Wales. In England there are now 96 Unitary Authorities.

1.1.9

Both County and Unitary Authorities are Local Education Authorities (LEAs). In Northern Ireland the five education authorities are known as Education and Library Boards.

1.1.10

However, despite the differences between the component parts of the UK, it still has a single government, a single currency, a single economy, a single tax system. The differences between the parts have often been more formal than real. Legislation on education for Scotland, and Orders in Council for Northern Ireland, are recognisably similar to the legislation for England and Wales. The general structures of education, training and qualifications are still almost the same throughout the UK, and are closer to each other than any one of them is to the structure of any other EU Member State.

1.1.11

However, the present government has embarked on a programme of fundamental constitutional change, which includes

- reform of the House of Lords, on lines which have not yet been determined
- creation from 1999 of an elected Assembly for Scotland, with considerable powers to legislate, with executive functions, and the ability, within limits, to raise tax
- creation, also from 1999, of an elected Assembly for Wales, but with less legislative and executive powers than Scotland (although it will be responsible for education and training), and none in relation to taxation
- as part of the peace process in Northern Ireland, recreation of an elected Assembly (elections took place in May 1998), which assumes responsibility for transferred functions, including education and training
- the first steps towards regionalising England by creating from 1999 nine Regional Development Agencies (see paragraph 1.1.12 and 1.1.13 below).

1.1.12

The English Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) will be based on existing Government Offices for the Regions (created by the previous government), except that there will be a single RDA for the North West and Merseyside, instead of the present two. The Greater London Authority (GLA) will be directly elected from 2000. The London RDA will be accountable to the GLA and there will be an elected mayor for London. The government is *'committed to introduce directly elected regional government in England, where there is a demand for it.'* It should be noted that the RDA areas are different in some respects to the regions so far used by EUROSTAT for statistical purposes. The most significant difference is that London is treated as a separate region and not merely a part of the South East. In the tables in this report the EUROSTAT regions are used unless there is explicit reference in the text to Government Offices for the Regions. The regional boundaries shown on the map on page 12 are those of the RDAs.

1.1.13
To put regionalisation into context:

- England is the largest part of the EU not sub-divided into regions which have considerable responsibilities for education, or training, or both

- all the proposed English regions, except the North East, have a larger population than Wales, and five have a larger population than Scotland.

1.1.14
The effects of these constitutional changes will be to increase the asymmetry of the UK. Indeed the differences are already such that to confine any serious study of education and training in the UK to the position in England (as is often the case), would not provide a true picture. In this publication, therefore, there is some coverage of the systems in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Education and training

1.1.15
It is no longer possible to make clear distinctions between education and training. In the 1960s and 1970s there was greater clarity, because the industrial training system had no responsibilities for school education and virtually none in relation to university, polytechnic and post-graduate provision. The only substantial overlap was with the further education sector, and even there the boundaries were reasonably clear.

1.1.16
During the 1980s there was a considerable blurring of these boundaries. Although the then Department of Education and Science in England (and its counterparts in the other parts of the UK) remained responsible in legislative terms for schools, colleges and institutions of higher education, Department of Employment programmes funded developments in all the educational sectors. The formal convergence of education and training has been increased by the amalgamation in July 1995 of hitherto separate government departments to form the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE). Both in Scotland and in England separate bodies were previously responsible for school and for vocational qualifications, but in both countries the bodies were amalgamated during 1997.

1.1.17
Although vocational and 'academic' qualifications are being brought closer together, it is still possible to use the generic term 'vocational education and training' (VET) and to navigate through the system by defining responsibilities for policy, implementation and funding.

1.1.18
The asymmetry of the UK has affected these responsibilities for VET also. In the field of education, Scotland and Northern Ireland have long had separate systems, but the Welsh Office only assumed responsibility for education in the 1980s. There are separate education departments for

- England: Department for Education and Employment (DfEE)
- Wales: Welsh Office (WO)
- Scotland: Scottish Office (SO)
- Northern Ireland: Department of Education for Northern Ireland (DENI).

1.1.19
In the field of training, government intervention only started in the mid-1960s. Northern Ireland has always had a separate training system, but there was until quite recently a single system for England, Wales and Scotland. Training in Scotland is not the responsibility of the Department for Education and Employment, but is administered by Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise which are funded through the Scottish Office. In Wales the responsibility has rested with the Welsh Office from 1992. Training in Northern Ireland is the responsibility of the Training and Employment Agency. However, Northern Ireland has tended to adopt the same system of vocational qualifications as England and Wales, but a different system has existed in Scotland since the 1970s.

1.1.20
In terms of political accountability, in 1998 the only elected bodies were the House of Commons and the multi-functional local government councils. While these remain responsible for most education up to the statutory school leaving age (except in Northern Ireland), since 1993 responsibilities for post-school further education have been shared by the Secretaries of State and the institutions themselves, and in England and Wales by Funding Councils whose members are appointed by the Secretaries of State.

1.1.21
Training has never been a function of elected local councils. While the Secretaries of State remain accountable to Parliament, local responsibility for training in England and Wales has been devolved by contract to Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) in England and Wales and to Local Enterprise Companies (LECs) in Scotland, these bodies being created under company law (see paragraphs 3.2.16 to 3.2.19 and 4.1.10).

1.1.22
In the UK there has been no formal role for the social partners since 1988, although the main employers' organisation, the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), has had a major influence on many of the changes since then. In 1998 the present government (elected in May 1997) was encouraging trade unions to use their special strengths to support its education and training policies.

1.1.23

The government's overall aim for education and training is:

- to support economic growth and improve the nation's competitiveness and quality of life by raising standards of educational achievement and skills;
- to promote an efficient and flexible labour market by enhancing choice, diversity and excellence in education and training, and by encouraging lifelong learning.

1.1.24

The government's role is to set the framework for the education and training system and to work in partnership with other central and local bodies to implement policy. It also provides funds for many of the public bodies involved in education and training.

Intermediate agencies

1.1.25

The implementation of government policies in education and training is partly carried out by local authorities, partly by the schools, colleges and universities themselves and partly through a series of intermediate agencies created by government. These fall into three groups: national, local and sectoral or occupational.

1.1.26

In 1998, the national intermediate agencies relevant to VET in England included:

- the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFC), responsible for allocation of government funds to universities and institutions of higher education
- the Higher Education Quality Council (HEQC), responsible for the quality of higher education
- the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC), responsible for both the allocation of funds to, and the adequacy and quality of provision of, the Further Education Sector colleges
- the Training Standards Council (TSC), responsible from April 1998 for monitoring the quality of publicly funded training programmes
- the Teacher Training Agency (TTA), responsible for the training of school teachers
- the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), responsible for oversight of schools curriculum and qualifications and for vocational qualifications, including the accreditation of bodies which award qualifications
- the British Educational Communications and Technology Agency (BECTa), previously the National Council for Educational Technology, responsible for the encouragement of educational technologies - mostly in schools

- the National Advisory Council for Education and Training Targets (NACETT), responsible for monitoring progress towards the National Targets, advising government on policies which influence progress towards the targets and influencing employer commitment to the targets.

1.1.27
There are equivalent Funding Councils in Wales. In Scotland there is a Higher Education Funding Council and one for Further Education has been operative from April 1999. The last four agencies in the list have similar bodies in Scotland.

1.1.28
The intermediate agencies which are based on local areas include:

- the 79 Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) in England and Wales
- Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and their respective networks of Local Enterprise Companies (LECs) in Scotland
- over 60 careers services, which are no longer under local authority control.

1.1.29
The sector and occupation-based intermediaries until recently included about 180 bodies with varying responsibilities, but a process of rationalisation has been undertaken with the aim of reducing fragmentation and creating some 70 more powerful government recognised sectoral bodies called National Training Organisations (NTOs), with a national 'voice' through the National Training Organisation National Council (see paragraphs 3.2.9 to 3.2.15 below).

Note
Changes in the infrastructure described above were foreshadowed in the government White Paper Learning to Succeed published on 30 June 1999. A summary of these is provided in Annex 5.

1.2 Population

1.2.1
In mid-year 1996 the population of the UK was 58 801 000. The table below shows the breakdown between the component parts of the UK and by gender.

Table 1. **Population by gender, 1996, in thousands**

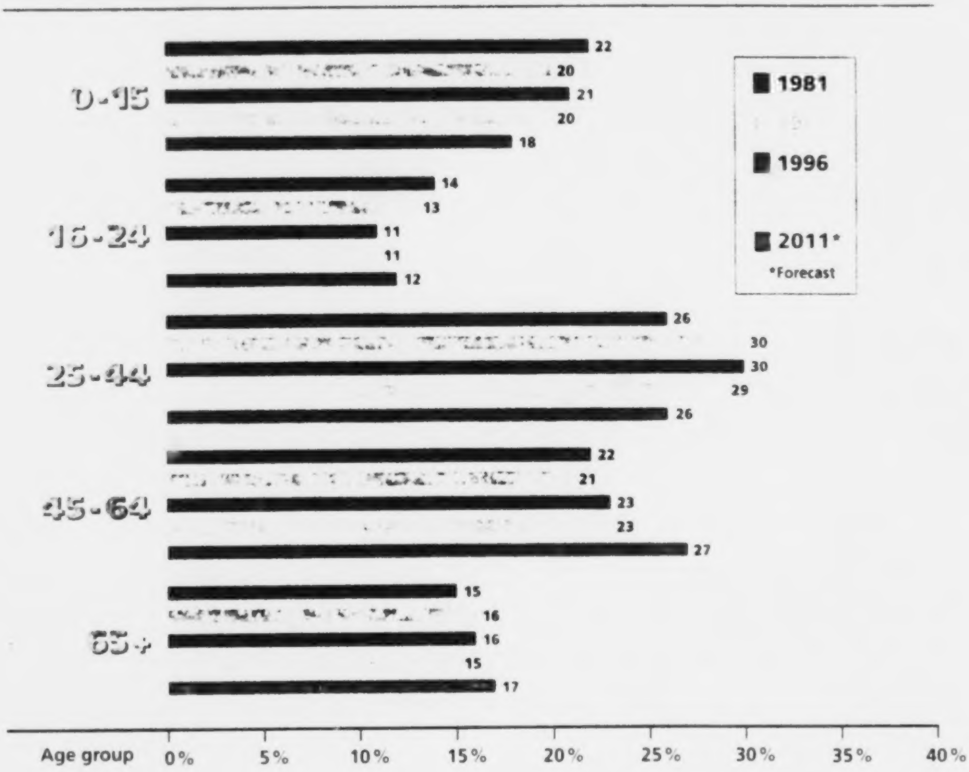
	UK	England & Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
Total	58 801	52 010	5128	1663
Male	28 856	25 557	2486	812
Female	29 946	26 453	2642	851

SOURCE **OFFICE FOR NATIONAL STATISTICS, SOCIAL TRENDS, 1998**

1.2.2

The population in the UK is ageing, but more slowly than in some other countries.

Figure 1. Population, by age groups, 1981 to 2011, as % of total



SOURCE: OFFICE FOR NATIONAL STATISTICS, SOCIAL TRENDS, 1998

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1.2.3

There are considerable differences between regions in population size, density and age:

Figure 2. **Population by region (thousands), density and age group, 1994**

	Average population	Density (persons/km^2)	% under 15	% over 65
North	3 100	201	19.4	16.0
Yorkshire and Humberside	5 026	326	19.5	15.9
East Midlands	4 103	263	19.3	15.8
East Anglia	2 106	168	18.7	17.2
South East	17 871	656	19.1	15.1
South West	4 796	201	18.2	18.6
West Midlands	5 295	407	19.9	15.4
North West	6 412	873	20.2	15.6
Wales	2 913	140	19.6	17.3
Scotland	1 642	67	19.0	15.1
Northern Ireland	1 558	122	24.1	12.7
UK	56 618	242	10.0	15.7

SOURCE EUROSTAT ***REGIONAL STATISTICAL YEARBOOK 1997***

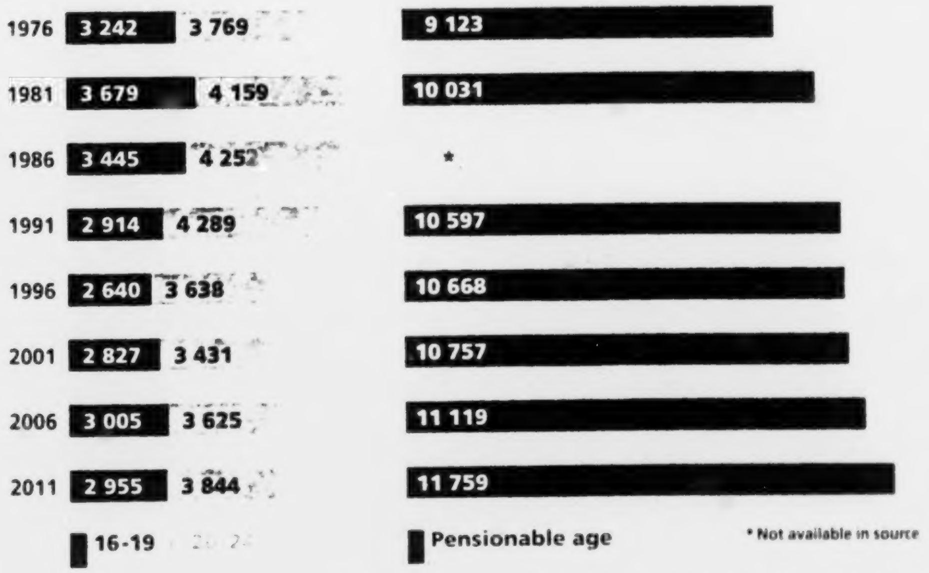
1.2.4

Net migration between the UK regions is comparatively low, although some sub-regional areas experience greater inward or outward flows. These flows are not considered to be a factor in the provision of vocational education and training; for example comparatively high migration to the South West reflects its popularity as a retirement area.

1.2.5

Despite the growth of continuing or life-long education and training, the concentration of expenditure and effort on vocational education and training is still likely to focus on the two age groups 15-19 and 20-24. Figure 3 indicates the fluctuation of numbers in these groups in the UK between 1976 and 2011. This illustrates the underlying causes of high youth unemployment in the 1980s, limited numbers of young people available for employment in the mid-1990s, and a gradual rise to fairly large numbers of young people to the middle of the first decade of the 21st century, followed by a gradual fall. The table also shows the growth in numbers of people of pensionable age – at present men at 65, women at 60, but between April 2010 and March 2020 a change of women's pensionable age to 65 will be phased in.

Figure 3. **Selected age groups, 1976 to 2011 (in thousands)**



SOURCE ANNUAL ABSTRACT OF STATISTICS 1998/ LABOUR MARKET TRENDS JUNE 1998

1.3 The economy and labour force

The economy

1.3.1

Indicators of the economy include:

- gross domestic product (GDP)
- government spending as % of GDP
- government gross debt as % of GDP
- inflation.

Gross domestic product (GDP)

1.3.2

Overall prosperity is measured by total GDP and GDP per capita. GDP can be expressed in either ECU or Purchasing Power Standards (PPS). Figure 4 sets out the position for the UK and its regions (see paragraph 1.1.12 above) in 1995 and compares these with the EU as a whole.

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Figure 4. **Total and per capita GDP, in ECU and PPS, by area, 1995 with EU comparison, 1980 and 1995**

	Total GDP million ECU	Total GDP million PPS	GDP per capita ECU	GDP per capita PPS	GDP per capita 1980 (EU 12=100)	GDP per capita 1995 (EU15=100)
North	38 559	44 354	12 457	14 329	87	85
Yorkshire and Humberside	65 936	75 846	13 110	15 080	88	88
East Midlands	56 083	64 512	13 599	15 643	91	93
East Anglia	30 656	35 264	14 440	16 610	92	98
South East	305 851	351 819	17 002	19 558	113	116
South West	67 151	77 244	13 912	16 003	89	93
West Midlands	71 203	81 904	13 418	15 435	88	90
North West	82 724	95 158	12 906	14 846	92	88
Wales	34 861	40 100	11 952	13 748	79	80
Scotland	74 090	85 226	14 424	16 592	91	97
Northern Ireland	19 297	22 198	11 703	13 462	73	79
All UK	846 411	973 623	14 442	16 613	96	98
EU 15	6 447 908	6 447 908	17 280	17 280		

SOURCE **EUROSTAT: REGIONS STATISTICAL YEARBOOK, 1997**

1.3.3

There has been steady, but not spectacular, growth in GDP in recent years, as illustrated below.

Table 2. **GDP growth, 1992 to 1997 (1990=100)**

1992	97.5
1993	99.5
1994	103.8
1995	106.7
1996	109.2
1997	113.0

SOURCE **LABOUR MARKET TRENDS: APRIL 1998**

1.3.4

In the UK, government spending as a percentage of GDP has long remained below the EU average.

Table 3. **Government expenditure as % of GDP, 1979 to 1995**

	1979	**1981**	**1989**	**1995**
UK	41.0	45.7	38.6	42.5
EU average	45.5	49.0	47.1	50.7

SOURCE **EUROSTAT**

1.3.5

The UK's general government gross debt as a percentage of GDP averaged 48.9 in 1981-90 (EU 51.6) but rose to an estimated 55.6 in 1996 (EU 74.1).

1.3.6

In March 1998 the UK annual rate of inflation was 1.6% (EU 1.3%).

Employment and the labour market

1.3.7

The key employment and unemployment indicators for the United Kingdom in comparison with the EU as a whole are shown below.

Figure 5. Employment in the United Kingdom and the EU, 1985 to 1996

	1985		1990		1995		1996	
Total	**UK**	**EU**	**UK**	**EU**	**UK**	**EU**	**UK**	**EU**
Population of working age (000)	36 706	224 122	37 018	229 685	37 411	244 828	37 511	245 927
Employment rate (% population 15-64)	66.3	59.8	72.6	62.6	70.0	60.3	69.8	60.3
Activity rate (% population 15-64)	74.9	66.4	78.0	67.8	76.6	67.6	76.0	67.7
Unemployment rate (% labour force)	11.5	9.9	7.1	7.7	8.8	10.8	8.2	10.9
Youth unemployment (% labour force 15-24)	18.5	22.0	18.3	21.2	15.9	21.6	15.5	21.8
Long term unemployment (% unemployed)	48.1	54.6	35.5	51.0	43.5	49.2	39.8	48.2
Men	**UK**	**EU**	**UK**	**EU**	**UK**	**EU**	**UK**	**EU**
Population of working age (000)	18 333	110 495	18 529	114 049	18 812	122 134	18 886	122 679
Employment rate (% population 15-64)	77.5	75.0	82.3	76.0	77.0	70.8	76.4	70.4
Activity rate (% population 15-64)	87.8	82.2	88.8	81.0	85.7	78.2	84.5	78.0
Unemployment rate (% labour force)	11.8	8.8	7.4	6.3	10.1	9.4	9.5	9.6
Youth unemployment (% labour force 15-24)	19.7	20.6	19.3	14.0	18.1	20.2	18.0	20.6
Long term unemployment (% unemployed)	55.2	53.5	43.9	49.8	49.6	48.3	45.9	46.3
Women	**UK**	**EU**	**UK**	**EU**	**UK**	**EU**	**UK**	**EU**
Population of working age (000)	18 372	113 604	18 489	115 636	18 598	122 688	18 625	123 258
Employment rate (% population 15-64)	55.2	45.0	62.8	49.4	62.8	49.9	63.1	50.2
Activity rate (% population 15-64)	62.0	51.0	67.2	54.8	67.5	57.1	67.5	57.4
Unemployment rate (% labour force)	11.0	11.7	6.6	9.8	7.0	12.5	6.5	12.5
Youth unemployment (% labour force 15-24)	17.0	23.6	17.1	22.9	13.3	23.2	12.5	23.3
Long term unemployment (% unemployed)	36.0	54.2	23.1	52.0	32.3	50.0	28.1	50.2

SOURCE: *EMPLOYMENT IN EUROPE 1997*

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1.3.8
Seasonally adjusted unemployment rates in February 1998 are shown in the table below.

Table 4. **Unemployment by gender and under 25 age group, 1998 (%)**

	All age groups			Under 25		
	Total	**Male**	**Female**	**Total**	**Male**	**Female**
UK	6.5	7.1	5.9	13.6	14.8	12.1
EU15	10.3	8.9	12.2	20.3	18.6	22.0

SOURCE **EUROSTAT**

1.3.9
Over the last half decade the UK unemployment rate has fallen in relation to the EU average.

Table 5. **Unemployment (seasonally adjusted) in %, UK and EU average, 1992 to 1998**

	UK	EU average
1992	10.1	9.2
1993	10.4	10.7
1994	9.6	11.1
1995	8.7	10.7
1996	8.2	10.9
1997 (June)	7.3	10.7
1998 (January)	6.7	10.4

SOURCE **LABOUR MARKET TRENDS: APRIL 1998**

1.3.10
Figure 6 shows the proportion of employment in agriculture, industry and services, and the general trend of shifting from industry to services, together with a comparison with the EU as a whole.

Figure 6. Employment by sector and gender in the UK and EU, 1985 to 1996, in %

	1985		1990		1995		1996	
Total	UK	EU	UK	EU	UK	EU	UK	EU
Agriculture	2.4	8.4	2.2	6.7	2.1	5.3	2.0	5.1
Industry	34.7	34.2	32.3	33.1	27.4	30.2	27.5	29.8
Services	63.0	57.4	65.5	60.2	70.5	64.6	70.6	65.1
Men	UK	EU	UK	EU	UK	EU	UK	EU
Agriculture	3.1	8.7	3.0	7.1	2.7	5.9	2.6	5.7
Industry	45.5	42.6	43.7	42.0	38.3	39.7	38.5	39.5
Services	51.4	48.7	53.3	50.9	59.0	54.4	58.9	54.7
Women	UK	EU	UK	EU	UK	EU	UK	EU
Agriculture	1.3	7.8	1.1	5.9	1.2	4.4	1.2	4.2
Industry	19.5	20.7	17.3	19.7	14.0	16.7	13.9	16.3
Services	79.2	71.5	81.5	74.4	84.8	78.9	85.0	79.6

SOURCE ***EMPLOYMENT IN EUROPE 1997***

1.3.11

Compared with the EU as a whole, the UK has a high proportion of part-time workers.

Figure 7. Employment by type (excluding full employment) and gender in the UK and EU, 1985 to 1996

	1985		1990		1995		1996	
Total	UK	EU	UK	EU	UK	EU	UK	EU
Self employed (% employed)	11.4	13.1	13.4	15.3	13.0	15.0	12.6	15.0
Employed part-time (% total employed)	21.2	10.8	21.7	13.5	24.1	16.0	24.6	16.4
Employed on fixed term contracts (% employees)	7.0	9.0	5.2	10.2	7.0	11.5	7.1	11.8
Men	UK	EU	UK	EU	UK	EU	UK	EU
Self employed (% employed)	14.7	16.4	18.0	19.0	17.8	18.9	17.1	18.9
Employed part-time (% total employed)	4.4	2.9	5.3	3.9	7.7	5.2	8.1	5.5
Employed on fixed term contracts (% employees)	5.7	n.a.	3.7	9.1	6.2	10.7	6.0	11.0
Women	UK	EU	UK	EU	UK	EU	UK	EU
Self employed (% employed)	6.9	7.9	7.5	9.6	7.0	9.4	7.0	9.5
Employed part-time (% total employed)	44.8	23.4	43.2	28.1	44.3	31.3	44.8	31.6
Employed on fixed term contracts (% employees)	8.8	n.a.	7.0	11.7	7.8	12.5	8.2	12.7

SOURCE ***EMPLOYMENT IN EUROPE 1997***

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1.3.12

Variations from the national average in employment by sector are not great except in the case of Northern Ireland, but there are considerable regional variations in unemployment.

Figure 8. Unemployment by region, in April 1994 and 1996, by gender and age group (%)

	Total		Males		Females		Under 25 yrs		Over 25 yrs	
	94	96	94	96	94	96	94	96	94	96
North	11.4	9.6	14.4	11.9	7.5	6.7	19.1	17.0	9.7	8.1
Yorkshire and Humberside	9.7	8.1	11.7	9.7	7.1	6.0	17.1	15.5	8.2	6.7
East Midlands	8.8	6.7	10.3	7.8	6.8	5.2	15.3	12.6	7.5	5.6
East Anglia	7.5	5.9	8.5	6.6	6.2	4.9	12.4	10.1	6.5	5.0
South East	9.7	7.3	11.2	8.3	7.9	6.0	16.0	12.4	8.6	6.4
(of which) Greater London	13.0	10.3	14.9	11.8	10.6	8.4	21.0	17.0	11.5	9.1
South West	8.6	6.5	10.0	7.5	6.9	5.2	13.9	11.8	7.6	5.5
West Midlands	10.0	7.5	11.5	8.5	8.0	6.0	17.0	13.5	8.5	6.3
North West	10.2	7.9	12.4	9.7	7.4	5.7	18.6	15.2	8.4	6.5
Wales	9.7	8.0	11.8	9.5	6.9	5.9	17.9	14.7	8.0	6.6
Scotland	9.6	7.9	11.7	9.5	7.1	5.9	16.0	14.0	8.3	6.7
Northern Ireland	14.5	11.5	16.9	13.7	11.1	8.6	20.2	15.4	13.2	10.6
UNITED KINGDOM	9.8	8.3	11.5	9.8	7.5	6.5	16.5	14.9	8.4	7.1

SOURCE **EUROSTAT**

1.3.13

Compared with other countries the UK has been late in creating small businesses, but has accelerated during the 1990s. Different definitions of enterprise may give different statistical results. Table 6 is based on EUROSTAT calculations, but recent UK estimates suggest that, including units with one owner and no employees, there are some four million businesses with less than 250 employees.

Table 6. **Employment, by industry and company size, 1993**

		Very small 1-9	Small 10-49	Medium-sized 50-249	Large 250+	Total
			As % of total			(000)
Industry	Enterprises	65.3	25.3	7.5	1.9	139.2
	Employment	7.2	15.6	21.7	55.5	4867.1
Construction	Enterprises	86.0	12.1	1.6	0.3	102.4
	Employment	32.8	25.7	17.2	24.4	894.1
Trade and HoReCa	Enterprises	80.0	17.5	2.1	0.4	313.7
	Employment	20.8	21.3	13.0	44.9	4907.3
Other Services	Enterprises	84.3	12.8	2.4	0.6	271.4
	Employment	14.8	15.4	14.3	55.5	4472.8
All Sectors	**Enterprises**	**79.7**	**16.6**	**3.0**	**0.7**	**826.6**
	Employment	**15.4**	**18.0**	**16.4**	**50.2**	**15142.3**

SOURCE ***EUROSTAT***

1.4 Educational levels of the population and labour force

1.4.1

The UK's comparatively low rates of unemployment have been achieved despite the general educational levels of the population (except in the case of higher level qualifications) comparing fairly unfavourably with the EU average. In 1997, 44.8 % of the UK population aged 25-29 had low levels of educational attainment (compared with 40.6 % in the EU as a whole), while 31.9 % (39.8 %) had medium levels of attainment. However, 23.4% of the UK population had higher levels of attainment compared with 19.6 % in the EU as a whole.

1.4.2

The government, concerned about skills levels in the UK, appointed a Skills Task Force which issued its first report in September 1998. This stated that there was evidence of a major skills deficiency in the UK: low numbers holding intermediate level vocational qualifications. Some 17% of the UK labour force in craft occupations hold no qualifications at all, and the position is worse in specific industries (22% in construction, 27% in food preparation and 42% in textiles and garments). Figure 9 shows the proportion of the population qualified to levels 2 and 3 (these levels refer to NVQs - see para 5.1.9).

Figure 9. **Proportion of the UK population qualified to levels 2 and 3 and above (1994)**

level 2 and above

General education - new entrants to work force	37%
General education - total population	23%
Vocational training - new entrants to work force	21%
Vocational training - total population	22%
Total - new entrants to work force	**58%**
Total - total population	**45%**

level 3 and above

General education - new entrants to work force	20%
General education - total population	16%
Vocational training - new entrants to work force	16%
Vocational training - total population	14%
Total - new entrants to work force	**36%**
Total - total population	**30%**

SOURCE ***SKILLS TASK FORCE 1998***

1.4.3

In 1996 the International Adult Literacy Survey measured the abilities of people aged 16 to 65 on prose literacy (ability to understand text), document literacy (ability to locate and use information in charts and tables) and quantitative literacy (ability to perform basic arithmetic operations on numbers embedded in the text). Performance in each dimension is graded into five levels, with Level 3 being considered by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) to be the minimum level required for modern life and work. The following table shows the percentages of adults in Great Britain who failed to reach OECD level 3.

Table 7. **Proportion of adults who failed to reach OECD literacy level 3, 1996 in %**

	Males	**Females**
Prose	51	53
Document	45	56
Quantitative	45	58

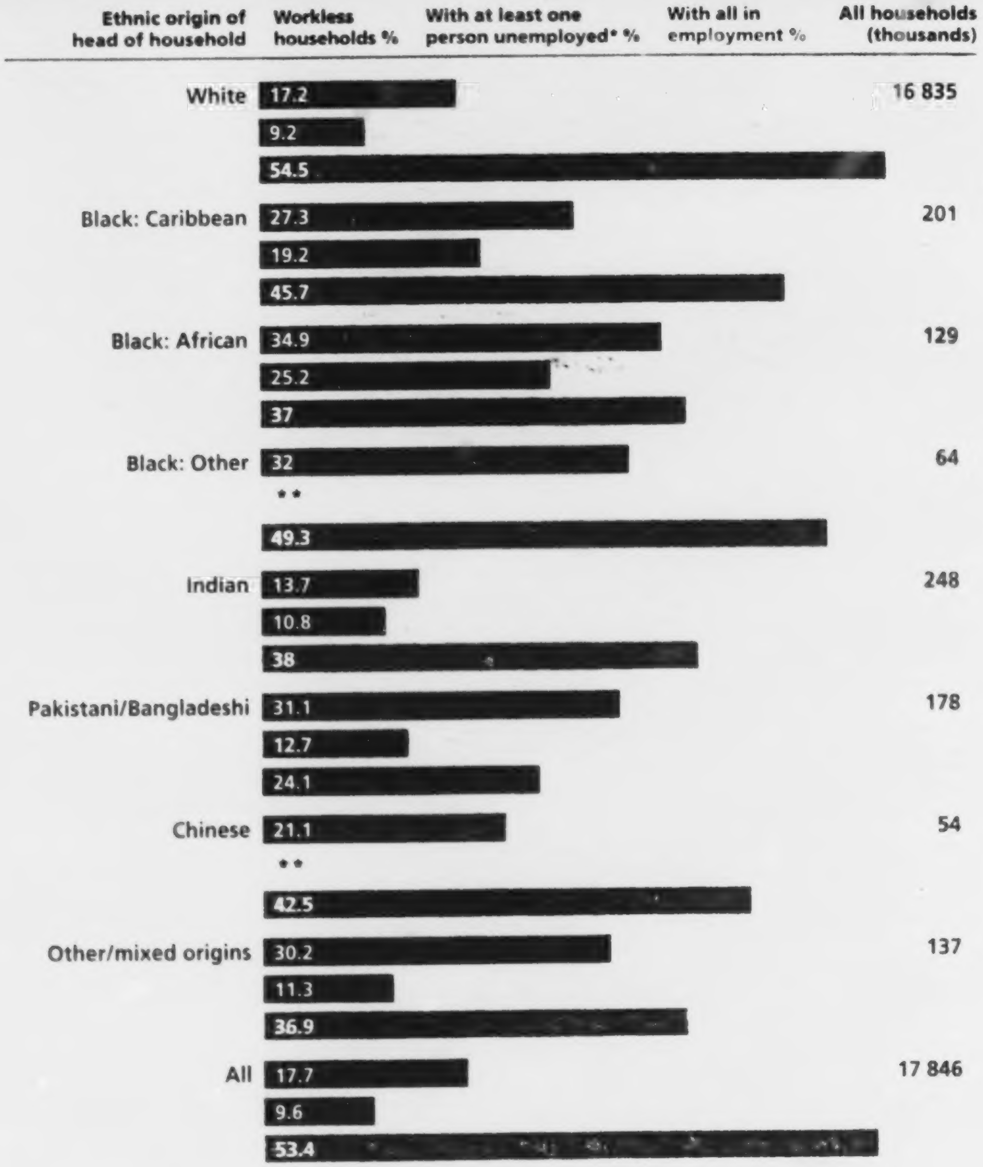
SOURCE ***SOCIAL TRENDS 1998***

1.5 Ethnic minorities

1.5.1

Ethnic origin affects employment and unemployment. The table below shows, by ethnic origin of the head of household, the total number of households with people of working age in the UK in spring 1997 and the percentages of workless households (where no one of working age is employed), those with all of working age in employment, and those with at least one person unemployed.

Figure 10. **Working age households by ethnicity of head of household, UK, spring 1997**



* As defined by the International Labour Organisation

** Sample size too small for reliable estimate

SOURCE *LABOUR MARKET TRENDS AUGUST 1998 BASED ON LABOUR FORCE SURVEY HOUSEHOLD DATASETS*

The low rate of 'all in employment' in Pakistani/Bangladeshi households reflects the low level of economic activity among Pakistani/Bangladeshi women, and probably also the tendency for people in these ethnic groups to live in larger households.

1.5.2

In the UK as a whole, ethnic and linguistic groups are very small minorities, but they tend to be concentrated in particular urban areas. In state funded secondary schools in England, English is an additional language for 7.8% of pupils. The next table shows the proportion of state funded secondary school pupils by broad ethnic group.

Table 8. **Percentages of secondary school pupils by broad ethnic group (1998)**

White	88.7
Black Caribbean heritage	1.4
Black African heritage	0.9
Black other	0.7
Indian	2.7
Pakistani	2.6
Bangladeshi	0.9
Chinese	0.4
Any other minority ethnic group	1.7

SOURCE: **DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT**

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1.6 Employment and skill needs

1.6.1

Considerable changes are forecast to 2006 in employment by sector and by occupational category.

Table 9. **Employees by sector, 1996, in %, with forecast changes in % to 2006**

	1996	2006
• Manufacturing	16.4	-12
• Primary and utilities (eg water, electricity)	3.2	-25
• Mainly public services of which	29.1	+11
- Education & Health	18.5	
- Public Administration and Defence	5.4	
- Other	5.2	
• Financial and Business Services of which	16.8	+17
- Business Services	11.8	
- Banking	3.0	
- Property, Printing & Research	1.9	
• Transport and Communication	5.8	-4
• Distribution, Hotels and Catering of which	22.2	+13
- Retailing	10.2	
- Wholesaling and Hotels	5.6	
• Construction	6.5	+3

SOURCE *LABOUR MARKET & SKILL TRENDS 1997/1998*

Table 10. **Employees and self-employed by main occupational category, in %, 1981 and 1996, with percentage change to 2006**

Occupational category	1981	1996	Change to 2006
• Managers and Administrators	13.1	16.5	+10
• Professional Occupations	8.4	9.5	+14
• Associate Professional/Technical	7.2	9.9	+15
• Clerical and Secretarial	16.8	15.9	-1
• Craft and Skilled Manual	17.4	12.4	-4
• Personal & Protective Services	7.3	10.0	+17
• Sales Occupations	7.1	7.5	+12
• Plant and Machine Operators	12.1	10.1	-2
• Others	10.7	8.3	-1

SOURCE *LABOUR MARKET & SKILL TRENDS 1997/1998*

1.6.2
These estimates of employment levels do not tell the whole story. In particular they do not show the level of replacement demand. Some work on this issue has been done by Business Strategies Ltd which, in *Labour Market and Skills Trends 1996/97*, give two illustrative examples:

- Skilled Engineering Trades. Expected job loss of 13 000 per year in the period 1996-2006 (1.4% annually). But individuals will also leave these occupations (eg on retirement or transfer to another occupation). The estimated requirement for training for replacement in these trades is 6.5% or 60 000 new entrants each year.

- Clerical occupations. No major change in the number of jobs is anticipated, but past experience suggests that as many as 345 000 new entrants will be required each year from non-employment sources.

1.6.3
There is also a trend, which is very difficult to quantify, of a need for both higher levels and a broader range of skills in most occupations. New business and production systems are being adopted, often involving new technology, especially Information Technology. More emphasis is being put on quality and customer care. A 1997 study (*Skill Needs in Britain*) surveyed employers: 69% thought that there was a need for increasing skills of average employees. Around one-fifth (18%) of employers felt there was a gap between the skills of their current employees and those needed to meet their business objectives. The skills most commonly thought to be lacking by those who thought there was a skills gap were computer literacy skills (55%) and customer handling skills (54%). 37% of firms employing 16-19 year olds thought there was a skills gap for these employees.

1.6.4
Because the government is aware of these trends, it appointed the National Skills Task Force (see paragraph 1.4.2) to assess skill need changes in a range of key occupational areas. Moreover the whole thrust of policies on education and training is planned to make the UK more competitive in global markets, taking into account the shifts in employment outlined above.

Chapter 2 Brief description of the education system and its development

2.1 Historical development

2.1.1

Until the late nineteenth century, education was provided in schools sponsored by various communal and religious foundations, or by private bodies or even individuals. Throughout the nineteenth century, however, there was a series of government reports which expressed concern about the state of education.

2.1.2

Initially, state intervention in education was related to the conditions under which children worked, regulated by a series of Factory Acts from 1802 onwards. A law in 1833 prescribed that working children aged from 9 to 13 years of age had to receive, for two hours daily for six days a week, instruction in reading, writing and arithmetic. In 1844 the working hours for children were restricted to six and a half hours per day; they had to attend school every day for a further three hours. Laws of 1874, 1891 and 1901 then raised the minimum age for employment of children, successively to 10, 11 and 12 years, and the regulations for education and training were tightened up. Broadly similar developmental patterns were occurring in Scotland.

2.1.3

In 1870 the Elementary Education Act divided the country into school districts (boroughs or civil parishes, with London as a single school district), and introduced compulsory elementary education. A Board of Education was established by law in 1899.

2.1.4

The Education Act 1902 transferred the responsibility for education to the county and urban authorities which became known as Local Education Authorities (LEAs). This Act provided for a considerable expansion of secondary education, which nevertheless did not become compulsory until 1918. The Education Act of 1918 laid down that at least half of the costs of education were to be carried by the Treasury (Ministry of Finance) while the rest was to be covered by the local rates. Fees for elementary education were abolished completely. Compulsory education was extended to 14 years of age.

2.1.5

The Education Act 1944 made many legal changes which had been proposed for a long time. The compulsory school leaving age was raised to 15, and provision was included for it to be raised to 16 without further legislation (in fact this happened in 1972). The Board of Education became the Ministry of Education (and later the Department of Education and Science). Three levels of education (primary, secondary and further) were defined. Universities were not included in this legislation and retained their traditional autonomy.

2.2 Overview of the system

2.2.1
The UK education system can be divided into five sectors:

- pre-school education (more correctly 'pre-compulsory' as a considerable amount of provision is in primary schools)
- school education: primary and secondary (and in some areas middle schools which combine upper primary and the early years of secondary)
- further education (FE): general FE colleges; specialist colleges (mainly Agriculture and Art and Design); sixth form colleges
- higher education: universities and other higher education institutes
- adult education institutes (now largely subsumed within the FE sector).

2.2.2
Compulsory education (which is free in state maintained schools) is from ages 5 (4 in Northern Ireland) to 16 and is carried out exclusively in the school sector.

2.2.3
Post-compulsory education is carried out in the school, FE and higher education sectors, with the FE sector (described more fully in Chapter 3) having the largest numbers.

2.3 The education departments

2.3.1
As noted in paragraph 1.1.18 there are separate education departments for England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

2.3.2
In general terms, these government education departments:

- determine national aims and formulate national policy, including policies on the National Curriculum (see paragraph 2.5.5) and assessment of pupils of statutory school age;
- commission research and support actions on the development of the overall school curriculum and public examinations;
- set minimum standards of educational provision and monitor quality and cost effectiveness of provision;
- are responsible for the funding through intermediate agencies of further and higher education, and the largely indirect funding of school education.

2.3.3
Government education departments neither provide education nor administer individual schools or colleges, but they have the power to intervene if individual local authorities or boards of governors of schools and colleges do not discharge their statutory duties satisfactorily. They can influence developments, partly through the allocation of resources, partly through powers of approval (e.g. of a college's Articles of Government or courses which may receive funding), and partly by being able to require action to be taken (e.g. insisting on the publication of their examination results by schools and colleges).

2.3.4
All aspects of education in England are the responsibility of the Department for Education and Employment, and in Wales of the Welsh Office. This includes the registration, and arrangements for the inspection of, independent fee paying schools, of which there are nearly 2250 in Britain at primary and secondary level. These only account for about 7.5% of the school population and are not described in full in this monograph.

2.3.5
The Scottish Office is responsible to Parliament for the overall supervision and development of education in Scotland. Amongst many other functions the Secretary of State issues guidance to education authorities on the design and cost of educational buildings and on such matters as curriculum and teaching methods.

2.3.6
The Department of Education for Northern Ireland (DENI) has full responsibility for schools and further education in Northern Ireland. The five Education and Library Boards have statutory responsibility for provision of services equivalent to the education authorities in England and Wales, although their expenditure is 100% grant-aided by DENI. DENI currently pays salaries of teachers in all schools and of further education lecturers etc. as a matter of administrative convenience.

2.4 Local authorities

2.4.1
Publicly financed education was formerly the responsibility of local government, based on County Councils or Unitary Authorities. However in recent years further and higher education, and a growing number of schools, have been removed from local authority control.

2.4.2
Current expenditure by local authorities (including teachers' salaries) is met partly by the Revenue Support Grant from central government and partly by local authority revenues (e.g. income from the Council Tax and charges for local authority services). The actual amount of Revenue Support Grant received depends on the government's assessment of the authority's expenditure needs as compared with its locally-raised income.

2.4.3
Under the Education Reform Act 1988, schools were able to opt out from local authority control and become grant maintained, ie directly grant-aided by the Department for Education and Employment. By the 1996/97 academic year some 1150 schools, over 56% secondary, had opted out and become grant maintained schools. However, this arrangement has now been superseded by new legislation (see paragraph 2.5.3).

2.4.4
The Self Governing Schools (Scotland) Act 1989 made similar provision in Scotland to enable schools to opt out of local authority control and receive grants directly from the Secretary of State. In Scotland most of the schools supported from public funds are provided by the 32 education authorities.

2.5 Secondary education: England and Wales

2.5.1
There are over 3700 maintained (ie supported directly or indirectly by government funding) secondary schools in England and 225 in Wales. Secondary schools usually admit pupils aged 11 years. In England and Wales, over 90% of secondary pupils attend comprehensive schools, which admit pupils without reference to ability or aptitude and provide a wide range of secondary education for all or most of the children of a district.

2.5.2
In addition, the Education Reform Act 1988 provided for the setting up of City Technology Colleges in order to extend choice of school locally, and to pioneer new approaches to delivery of the curriculum. Other specialist colleges (eg for languages) have subsequently been established. Such colleges are required to offer free education to pupils of all abilities accepted from within their catchment areas. They are funded by central government directly and by industrial sponsors, but only comparatively few had been established by the end of 1997.

2.5.3
The Schools Standards and Framework Act, promulgated by Parliament in July 1998, introduced a new framework of foundation, community and aided schools which will better promote the government's wider objectives of raising standards. This framework replaces grant-maintained status, and will incorporate existing grant-maintained schools. The Act sets out the responsibilities of LEAs and of the governing bodies of schools, which are given more responsibilities for school management.

2.5.4
The Act also allows FE sector colleges to collaborate with LEAs to provide secondary education for 14-16 year olds.

2.5.5
As a result of the Education Reform Act 1988, all maintained schools in England and Wales (other than those in Education Action Zones) must provide a basic curriculum, a major innovation for the UK. This curriculum must include:

- religious education for all pupils (except those withdrawn by their parents);
- the National Curriculum, comprising
  - core subjects - mathematics, English, science. (In the schools in Wales which are Welsh-speaking, Welsh is a core subject).
  - other foundation subjects - technology, history, geography, art, music, physical education, plus - for pupils aged 11-16 - a modern foreign language.

2.5.6

In 1998 the government established 25 Education Action Zones (EAZs) in areas of social deprivation. Zones typically cover two or three secondary schools and their feeder primary schools (up to 20 schools in total), and are placed in areas facing challenging circumstances in terms of underachievement or disadvantage. Each zone represents partnership between businesses, parents, schools and LEAs to boost standards. They are run by a forum which sets action plans to raise standards. These are approved by government. Schools in EAZs can suspend or modify the national curriculum in other foundation subjects to allow more time to be spent on core subjects.

2.5.7

For each National Curriculum subject, there are attainment targets defining what pupils should know, understand, and be able to do by the end of four key stages, plus programmes of study showing the ground to be covered. The key stages cover the ages 5-7, 7-11, 11-14, 14-16; assessment at the end of each stage is reported in 10 grades, of which 10 is the highest.

2.5.8

The main external examination available to pupils at the end of lower secondary, the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE), is offered by five separate examining bodies in England and Wales. Candidates may take as few or as many subjects as they like. The examination is taken at 16 (earlier if the candidate is ready) and candidates are awarded one of seven grades (A to G). There is an overlap between GCSE syllabuses and the National Curriculum at key stage 4. However, pupils do not have to take GCSE examinations in all National Curriculum subjects and GCSE examinations are available in subjects which are not included in the National Curriculum.

2.5.9

Pupils who are likely to go on to university or other higher education courses usually study subjects to GCE A level (Advanced level of the General Certification of Education), the main external examination offered in schools at upper secondary level. Most pupils take 2 or 3 A levels and these are often criticised for being too specialist in content terms. This led to the introduction in 1989 of supplementary subjects (AS levels) which were intended to have half the content of an A level, but be of the same level of difficulty, thus enabling a pupil to study more subjects in the same time. However, AS levels have yet to gain wide acceptance.

2.5.10

General National Vocational Qualifications (see paragraph 5.1.4) are available for the 16 plus age group. In 1996 a new vocational qualification, Part One GNVQ, was piloted in over 250 schools, with candidate numbers rising from just under 5000 in

1997 to over 10 000 in 1998. A favourable interim report from the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) found that the new qualification gave positive motivation to young people across the ability range and that many of the pilot schools now had excellent links with local employers. Additional secondary schools are, since September 1998, able to offer Part One GNVQs to 14-16 year old pupils.

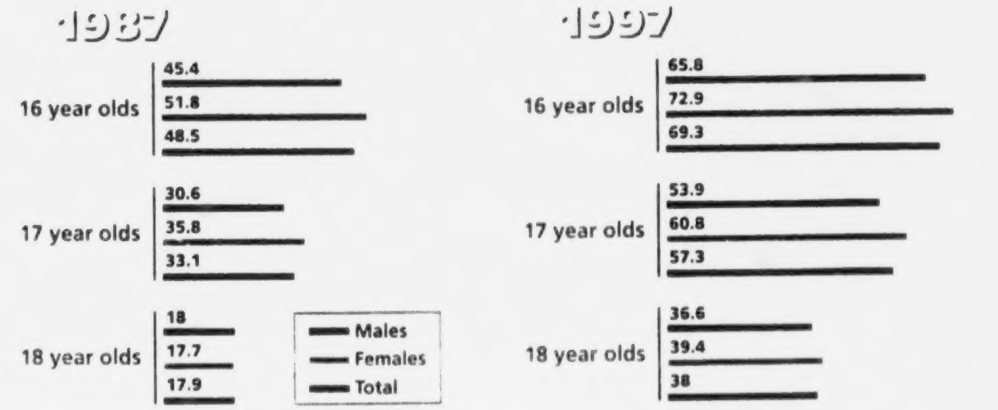
2.5.11
In 1996/97, 86.4% of pupils achieved 5 or more GCSEs at any grade, compared with 74% in 1988. 45.1% achieved 5 GCSEs at the higher grades (A-C), compared with 27% in 1988.

2.5.12
In 1996/97 in schools and FE colleges together:

- over 139 000 pupils aged 18 and under achieved three or more GCE A level or AS equivalent passes. These represented 23% of those aged 17 at the start of the academic year (17 year old population) and 64% of those attempting the exams
- over 175 500 pupils aged 18 and under achieved two or more GCE A level or AS equivalent passes. These represented 29% of the 17 year old population and 81% of those attempting the exams
- over 200 000 pupils aged 18 and under gained at least one GCE A level or AS equivalent pass. These represented 34% of the 17 year old population and 94% of those attempting the exams.

2.5.13
There has been a considerable increase over the past decade in the participation of 16, 17 and 18 year olds in full-time education. The following table compares the position at the end of 1987 with that at the end of 1997. For more details see paragraph 3.3.4.

Figure 11. **Participation of 16, 17 and 18 year olds in full-time education, England, 1987 and 1997 (% of age group)**



SOURCE DfEE JUNE 1998

2.5.14
In 1997 the new government published its White Paper *Excellence in Schools*, underlining its priority of raising standards in schools, including improving teaching generally, but particularly numeracy and literacy, for which targets have been set. A similar White Paper was published for Wales by the Welsh Office.

2.6. Secondary education: Scotland

2.6.1
In Scotland, secondary education usually begins at about 12 years of age. All secondary schools (over 400) under the management of education authorities have a comprehensive intake.

2.6.2
At lower secondary level in the four last years of compulsory education, the curriculum is divided into two stages, each lasting two years.

2.6.3
Unlike in England, where a 'core curriculum' is now mandatory, the Scottish curriculum is not prescribed by law except in respect of religious education and Gaelic speaking areas. Education authorities and head teachers in theory have considerable freedom to decide what courses should be available in any individual school. All schools are, nevertheless, expected to follow certain guiding principles recommended by the Secretary of State on the advice of the Scottish Consultative Committee on the Curriculum.

2.6.4
The first two years of secondary education are regarded as an exploratory period during which the progress of each pupil is carefully observed and pupils are given a wide variety of subjects so that they can find out where their particular aptitude, abilities and interests lie.

2.6.5
At the end of their second year, decisions are taken as to what subjects will be followed and although some selection of subjects may be necessary at this stage, the general aim is to maintain a well-balanced curriculum for all pupils in which each of the different modes of learning is represented. Whatever structure of curriculum is adopted, the government regards it as essential that English, mathematics, a modern foreign language and science are studied by all pupils.

2.6.6
The academic examination for lower secondary pupils in Scotland is the Standard Grade Certificate, which takes into account performance in examinations and the school's own assessment of pupils.

2.6.7
In post-compulsory education (defined in Scotland as fifth and sixth years), pupils are offered a wide curricular choice. At the heart of the curriculum are the courses leading to the Scottish Certificate Examination at Higher Grade, which serves as an entry qualification to higher education. It is usually taken at age 17. A Certificate of

Sixth Year Studies can be taken in up to a maximum of 3 subjects by pupils who have obtained 'Highers' in the subjects concerned.

2.6.8
The Scottish National Certificate, which was introduced in 1984, is validated by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA). It provides about 2700 modular courses to pupils who have completed the four compulsory years of secondary education (although they may be taken earlier). The number of students per annum attempting at least one SQA module now exceeds 200 000.

2.6.9
The modules are normally taken alongside general subjects being studied at Higher Grade. National Certificate modules are also undertaken by young people or adults in further education colleges, community education, private training centres or in employers' training provision. They provide opportunities for progression to courses in higher education through the Scottish Wider Access Programme (SWAP) and to certain advanced examinations of some professional bodies. Their flexibility makes it possible to provide a mix of subject areas depending on what is available locally and on the need for employment or registration requirements. The 40-hour modules cover all the major occupational areas in Scotland as well as subjects such as foreign languages and personal and social development. Modules can also be gained through the Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) process.

2.7 Secondary education: Northern Ireland

2.7.1
Maintained schools are 'controlled' (ie managed by the Education and Library Boards) or 'voluntary' (managed by a religious body). Although all schools are officially non-denominational, most Roman Catholics attend voluntary schools, under Roman Catholic management. There are two main types of secondary school: grammar and secondary schools. Grammar schools provide a range of courses for pupils between 11 and 18 years old, while secondary schools provide a similar range of courses for the 11-16 age group, although some secondary schools offer post-16 opportunities. Grammar schools can select pupils on the basis of academic ability. There are a few independent schools, which do not have to follow the common curriculum (see below).

2.7.2
The Northern Ireland equivalent to the Education Reform Act, the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989, provided for a common curriculum for pupils in the 230 or so maintained schools, with a division of the curriculum into key stages on the same lines as in England and Wales (paragraph 2.5.7). In addition to religious education, the curriculum of all children of compulsory school age (which is 4-16 in Northern Ireland) will be required to include five areas of study (six in secondary schools):

- English
- mathematics
- science and technology

- the environment and society
- creative and expressive studies
- language studies (secondary and Irish-speaking schools only)

Within each area of study, at least one subject is compulsory during certain years of compulsory schooling.

2.7.3
Every pupil is formally assessed, through centrally-determined arrangements and against specified attainment targets, at ages 8, 11, 14 and 16 in the compulsory subjects.

2.7.4
In addition, a number of 'educational' or 'cross-curricular' themes are included in the curriculum for all schools. These are not separate subjects but will be woven through the main subjects of the curriculum. The themes are:

- education for mutual understanding
- cultural heritage
- health education
- information technology
- economic awareness
- careers education.

2.7.5
At the end of compulsory school age most pupils sit the General Certificate of Secondary Education examination (GCSE). In the two years after this, most pupils staying at school follow GCE A level courses (paragraph 2.5.9). Standards in Northern Ireland examinations are generally comparable with those in England and Wales.

2.8 Higher education

2.8.1
In England the higher education sector comprises 72 universities (counting the 'federal' University of London as one although it has 28 degree awarding colleges) and some 50 other institutes of higher education which award degrees. These are all autonomous institutions, dependant on the Higher Education Funding Council for government funds and subject to the quality arrangements of the Higher Education Quality Council.

2.8.2
Up to 1993 there was a so-called 'binary divide' of higher education between universities and polytechnics and other institutions of higher education. This was then abolished and all polytechnics and a number of other higher education

institutions became universities. Since 1993 a number of other institutes of higher education have also become universities and are included in the total above.

2.8.3
In Wales there are two universities and six institutes of higher education. There are 13 universities in Scotland and two in Northern Ireland.

2.8.4
First degrees are normally awarded after three years of study, but sandwich courses, which involve periods of up to a year in employment, normally take four years.

2.8.5
In the UK as a whole student numbers in higher education have doubled since 1979 and the proportion of entrants to higher education has risen from one in eight in 1979 to almost one in three in 1995. There is no absolute right to enter HE. Each university (and often each faculty) decides its own admissions policy, although there is a central admissions system.

Figure 12. **Students obtaining higher education qualifications by subject of study, 1995/96 (thousands)**

	Sub-degree	First degree	Postgraduate	Total HE
Medicine & Dentistry	0.1	5.7	2.1	7.8
Subjects allied to Medicine	9.3	12.7	3.6	25.5
Biological Sciences	1.2	13.9	3.2	18.3
Vet. Science, agriculture & related	1.5	2.6	1.2	5.3
Physical Sciences	1.3	13.8	4.2	19.3
Mathematical Sciences	5.2	13.3	4.2	22.8
Engineering & Technology	6.7	23.4	7.4	37.6
Architecture, Building & Planning	2.6	8.3	2.6	13.6
Social Sciences	7.7	31.4	13.8	52.9
Business & Financial Studies	19.6	28.6	18.1	66.3
Librarianship & Info Science	0.7	2.8	1.8	5.4
Languages	1.4	16.4	3.0	20.8
Humanities	0.6	10.5	2.6	13.6
Creative Arts & Design	4.5	16.8	2.6	23.9
Education	1.0	1.7	3.0	5.7
Teacher training	2.8	13.3	25.3	41.4
Combined, general	7.4	37.3	6.9	51.6
Unknown *	10.1	2.8	1.2	14.2
All subjects	83.8	255.2	106.8	445.8

* These are qualifications taken at Further Education colleges in England, for which no subject breakdown is available.

SOURCE *EDUCATION AND TRAINING STATISTICS FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM 1997*

2.8.6
Women have now overtaken men in obtaining higher education qualifications.

Table 11. **Higher education (HE) graduates by level and gender, 1994 (thousands)**

	Sub-degree	First degree	Postgraduate	Total HE
Men	37.9	124.4	54.9	217.2
Women	45.9	130.8	51.9	228.6

SOURCE **EDUCATION AND TRAINING STATISTICS FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM 1997**

2.8.7
The National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education published its report *Higher Education in the Learning Society* in July 1997. Implementation of the report is likely to have a major impact on the future development of higher education in Britain. The government agreed with the National Committee of Inquiry that the cost of higher education should be shared between those who benefit from it. From the 1998/99 academic year, the government is introducing a tuition fee of UK £1000 (about 1400 ECU) per year - representing a quarter of the average cost of a course. Tuition will continue to be free for students from lower income families, but other full-time students will pay, depending on parental income.

2.9 Teacher training

2.9.1
The Teacher Training Agency was established in 1996 to coordinate the training of school teachers in England. Its remit may later be extended to the Further Education sector.

2.9.2
A national curriculum for initial teacher training was introduced from September 1998. This has a compulsory content in which trainee teachers are taught how to use information technology as a basis of their subject teaching; they have to be ICT-literate to a mandated standard to become qualified. The government is using the National Lottery funds for a four-year programme to fund ICT training for serving teachers. By 2002 all teachers will have had the chance to update their ICT skills.

2.10 Research

2.10.1
Educational research is undertaken by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) in England and Wales and the Northern Ireland Council for Educational Research (NICER). The Scottish Office Education Department mainly funds research which is related to Government policy. Projects are based in universities, colleges and the Scottish Council for Research in Education (SCRE), as well as a number of other research bodies. In both England and Scotland a wide range of research is funded covering both school and post-school education. The

number of projects in the latter sector has increased in recent years, although research in the schools sector still predominates.

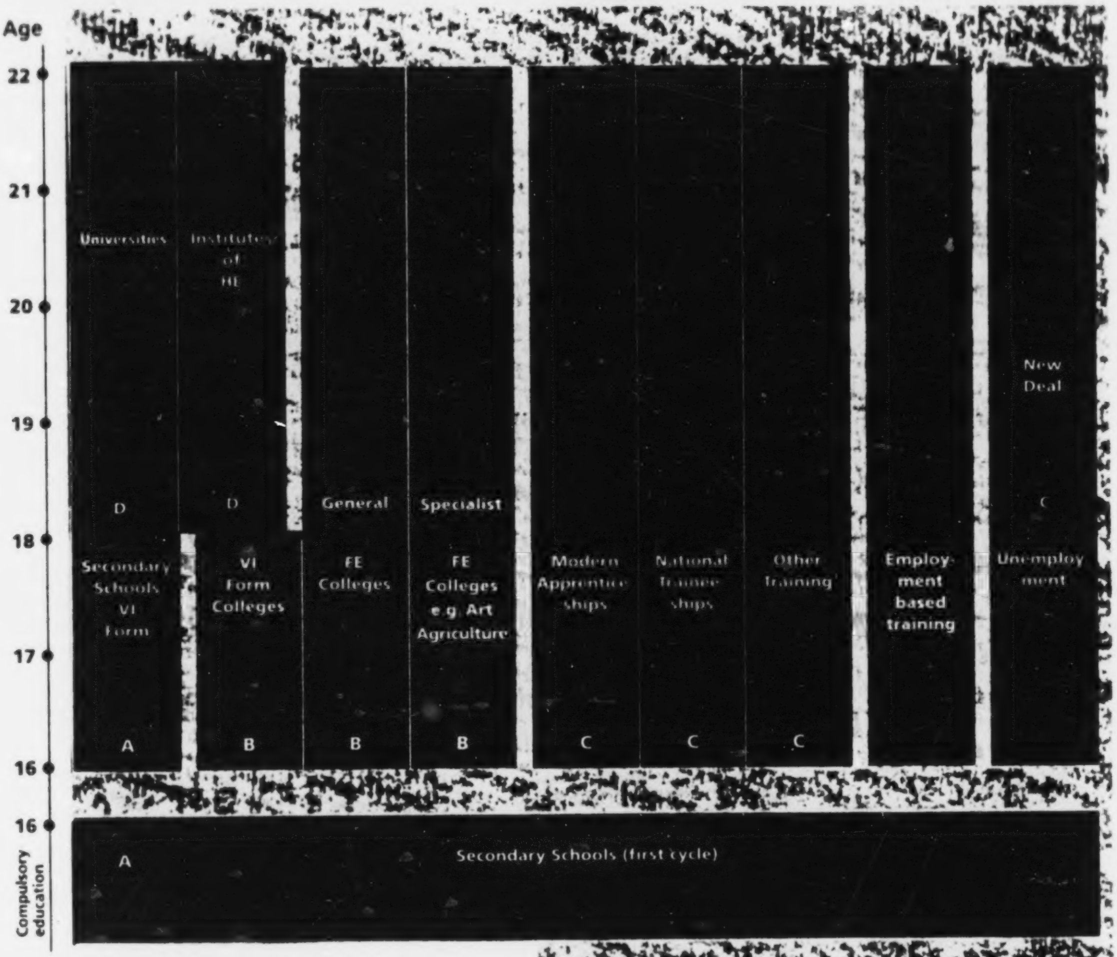
2.10.2

British universities are heavily engaged in research and its applications. In 1995/96, the universities received about UK £1.75 milliard (2 625 milliard ECU) public funding for research and a further UK £600 million (900 MECU) from private sources, at home and abroad. The quality of university research is assessed every four years to ensure that higher education funds are concentrated on excellent research departments with proven track records, while still allowing young researchers and new lines of research to be supported.

2.10.3

Over 40 science, business and research parks have been set up by universities and other higher education institutions to foster the development and commercial application of advanced technology. They provide a bridge between businesses and the research expertise of university staff.

Figure 13. **Post-compulsory options in the UK education and training system**



Note 1	The systems in Scotland and Northern Ireland are similar, but not identical
Note 2	A = Schools sector B = FE sector C = Government supported training D = HE sector

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Chapter 3 The vocational education and training system

3.1 Historical development of vocational education and training

Origins

3.1.1
Vocational training in England started with the medieval system of guilds, which controlled apprentice training and regulated the entry to trades. This lasted from the twelfth century until the passing of the Statute of Artificers in 1563, during the reign of Elizabeth I. Traces still remain of the guild-dominated crafts; for example the main London guilds helped found the City and Guilds of London Institute in 1878 (see Chapter 5), and the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths today assists the British Jewellers Association in formulating vocational qualifications for the industry.

3.1.2
The Statute of Artificers was already out of date when it came into force. The population rose from five to fourteen million from the end of the sixteenth to the beginning of the nineteenth century. The limitations imposed by the law became unworkable in the industrial revolution and the Statute was gradually and quietly ignored, until its abolition in 1814. For the next 150 years, the principle adopted by successive British governments was that training was solely a task for commerce and industry and was in no way the responsibility of the State.

The development of vocational education and training

3.1.3
The arrangements for vocational education and training which existed in the early nineteenth century proved inadequate in the face of increasing demands of industry and commerce. The industrial revolution, which occurred first in Britain, was not based there on a sound system of education and training. Rather, there was a combination of favourable circumstances (raw materials, the availability of capital, low taxes, a society which accepted social mobility, a legal system which enabled individuals and organisations to plan ahead with confidence). These factors enabled able and intelligent practical men to develop and exploit their ideas for industrial change. There was, however, a considerable vacuum in education and training. This vacuum was partly filled by the Mechanics Institutes, which first appeared in Scotland at the end of the eighteenth century, and then quickly spread out over the whole of the United Kingdom. They were intended to provide workers with skills of writing and arithmetic to meet the needs of expanding industries, and also to meet individuals' demands for knowledge.

3.1.4
In this way vocational training in Great Britain developed partly in parallel with the general system of education. The Mechanics Institutes were financed mostly by benefactors, and partly by the workers themselves; none received any subsidies from public funds. Regional unions of institutes started to form, and encouraged the idea of providing evidence of successful study by means of examinations. The Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufacturers and Commerce in Great Britain, founded in 1755, and today known as the Royal Society of Arts (RSA), was chosen for this

role. In 1852, 220 institutes joined the RSA, which then became the examination body for the affiliated Regional Unions. Some other institutes still carried on with their own examinations. In 1878 the main guilds of London had a major part in founding the City and Guilds of London Institute for the Advancement of Technical Education, thus renewing their original role in vocational training. In 1879 City and Guilds took over the technical examinations from the RSA, which thereafter confined itself to commercial and clerical subjects.

3.1.5

In 1889 the Local Education Authorities (LEAs) were empowered by the Technical Instruction Act to levy rates for the foundation of technical schools. The LEAs gradually became responsible for the Mechanics Institutes, and in this way a system of further education was created which is still recognisable today, in spite of considerable changes which occurred after 1956, and the more recent removal of colleges from local education authority control. Great Britain now had provisions for further education, which quickly developed into an unusually wide-ranging and adaptable system. Many of the 700 technical and commercial colleges forged close and lasting connections with the employers in their respective localities.

3.1.6

The colleges provided opportunities for ambitious men and women of any age to follow further education or vocational courses, and in this way to attain levels which matched their talents and energy. At the same time a wide range of recreational courses was developed, provided through a network of about 8000 evening institutes.

3.1.7

Originally most of the courses offered by the colleges were in the evenings. However day-release, block-release and sandwich courses gradually spread. In 1938 there were 42 000 full-time students in further education in England and Wales. Although there were just over one million part-time students, only 36 000 of these were given release by their employers to attend classes on two or more days in a week. Virtually all the others were attending classes in their own time, and often at their own expense. In practice only a small proportion of the population was able to take advantage of these opportunities.

Professional bodies

3.1.8

The late eighteenth century and the nineteenth century was a period in which people came together in societies and institutions because they wished to increase their knowledge of a particular subject or range of subjects. In 1851 there were only four universities in England - Oxford, Cambridge, Durham and London. Engineers and applied scientists did not go to university.

3.1.9

In the absence of a strong university sector, full membership of some of the institutions provided the status and recognition achieved in other countries by university degrees and higher degrees. During the nineteenth century this was often a way forward for the 'new' professions (e.g. civil engineering) in addition to the traditional ones of Church and Law. These major institutions evolved to qualify people by examination as practitioners in a particular field. Their importance for the upper end of vocational education and training exists to this day.

Technician qualifications

3.1.10
Full professional membership of these institutions was supplemented by technician qualifications after the 1914-1918 war (because of the belief that the British armaments industry had been insufficiently effective due to a lack of technician personnel). Many of the courses in colleges were designed to enable shop floor workers to obtain these technician qualifications and possibly even full professional status. However, open entry to these courses meant that many who had little hope of passing the examination joined them. The drop-out rate and examination failure rate became a national scandal, and in 1961 White Papers (*Better Opportunities in Technical Education* in England and Wales and a similar one in Scotland) proposed a re-structuring of vocational education courses into technician, craft and operative streams. This re-structuring lasted until the introduction of the present framework by the National Council for Vocational Qualifications in the 1980s (see section 5.1).

Training

3.1.11
From 1925 onwards there were Government Training Centres (GTCs) for vocational training. They were, however, more concerned with helping the unemployed than in meeting industry's needs for skilled workers. After the 1939-45 war they were used to rehabilitate ex-soldiers and disabled people and to train them to take part in the post-war recovery. From 1970 onwards training was provided in Skillcentres (formerly GTCs) for people who were unemployed or who were prepared to give up their jobs to achieve better qualifications, in the hope of gaining better jobs later on. The numbers of Skillcentres rose to over 100, with about 18 000 training places. Skillcentres remained part of government training provision until the late 1980s, when a number were closed and the remainder were privatised; one of the private owners has since gone into liquidation.

3.1.12
After the end of the 1939-45 war the Ministry of Labour set up a Joint Consultative Committee, with representatives of the employers and the trade unions, to develop suggestions for the employment and training of young people. A report in 1945 recommended the formation of National Joint Apprenticeship and Training Councils for each sector.

Government intervention in training

3.1.13
In 1958 the Carr report, *Training for Skill*, still supported a voluntary approach to industrial training, but this was not thought sufficient in an increasingly competitive international climate. Post-war government intervention in many parts of the economy was eventually applied to training also, and the Industrial Training Act was passed in 1964. By 1969 27 statutory Industrial Training Boards (ITBs) had been established. They had a tripartite membership: employers, trade unions and

educational interests; only the first two were entitled to vote on levy and grant matters.

3.1.14
Together with three voluntary Boards (for the Insurance Industry, the Merchant Navy and Local Government), the ITBs covered about 15.5 million employees in over one million firms out of a working population totalling 25 million. The levies collected by the statutory boards amounted to nearly UK £195 million a year (about 295 million ECU). The ITBs fixed their levies at between 0.5% to 2.5% of the total wage bill for each firm. Because of stiff opposition from the industry, the Agricultural, Horticultural and Forestry ITB was unable to collect a levy. The Board was therefore supported by an allocation of funds from the Government's agricultural price support scheme, and eventually came under Agricultural legislation.

3.1.15
At the end of the 1960s the Industrial Training Act was criticised, particularly by small firms who considered that they derived no benefit from the levy/grant system. After two years of study and debate, the newly-elected Conservative Government introduced the Employment and Training Act 1973, which provided for the establishment of an independent Manpower Services Commission (MSC). The levy/grant system was limited by the introduction of exemption provisions for companies which met certain training requirements, and the deficit made up by annual grants from the Treasury. Area Manpower Boards provided a measure of local advice. For administrative reasons almost all ITBs exempted small companies from the levy. This certainly contributed to the non-training culture of small businesses in the UK.

3.1.16
The early 1970s provided a high watermark of initial training under the Industrial Training Boards with, for example, some 21 000 young people in engineering receiving full-time first year off-the-job training; many of these were apprentices. By the middle of that decade, however, the post-war birth rate 'bulge' had worked its way through to the school leavers, and more young people were coming on to the employment market than there were jobs. Indeed, by the end of the 1970s an economic recession had so exacerbated youth unemployment that it became a major preoccupation of policy makers in vocational education and training.

3.1.17
A series of government and MSC reports and measures led to the introduction of a one year Youth Training Scheme (YTS) in the early 1980s. The significance of this was that it was available to school leavers, whether unemployed or in employment, and brought together a number of separate programmes.

3.1.18
Recruitment of apprentices dropped drastically in the recession, and there were also criticisms of the achievement of competence by time serving (which was often a feature of UK apprenticeship) and the comparatively high (by international standards) wages paid to apprentices. YTS was seen by some as a modern substitute. Although this view was not generally accepted, the early 1980s recession and the introduction of YTS mark a break with the historical system of apprenticeships in

most industries. The establishment of Modern Apprenticeships (paragraphs 3.3.12 - 3.3.18) builds on the traditional terminology but is based on a different approach.

3.1.19

By 1986 the YTS was extended to two years for 16 year-olds and one year for 17 year-olds. Although not all those who completed YTS found jobs, demographic factors gradually reduced the number of young people in the age group to the extent that by 1989 fears were being expressed about a 'demographic time bomb'. Industry feared it would be unable to recruit the young people it needed, and would have either to find other sources of recruitment, or to compete for those available, thus increasing wage inflation. However, the recession which started in 1990 reduced the expected demand and, while not having the same degree of seriousness as a decade earlier, by 1991 youth unemployment again emerged as a problem and has been perceived as one ever since despite the improvement in unemployment rates.

The decline of intervention

3.1.20

Meanwhile, in 1981, the MSC's New Training Initiative had ushered in a decade of change in the field of training. Industrial Training Boards were reviewed. Many were abolished immediately, and some over a period of time until, in 1998, only two remained. The factors which led to the dismantling of the Industrial Training Boards included the following:

- Although well and honestly managed, the ITBs were constrained by the legislation which established them to operate in a particular way (raising a levy from the industrial sector and returning most of it in grants based on 'training recommendations', which had to be sufficiently precise to support the payment of grants and therefore were often inflexible to meet the specific needs of industry). There was thus a perceived tendency in industry to 'train for grants' rather than to train for industrial need.

- Rising unemployment in the early 1980s, and especially youth unemployment, was an overriding major concern of government, and related more to geographical area than to industrial sector, while the powers given to ITBs under the Industrial Training Act had not proved sufficiently flexible to enable the training system to respond to the problems posed by unemployment.

- The wish to keep the number of ITBs comparatively low for ease of government administration meant that, in many cases, a number of industrial sectors which otherwise had little in common, were clustered together under the same ITB. This caused particular resentment among employers in the smaller sectors, who felt that their interests were being ignored in the interests of the larger sectors, e.g. furniture removers, which were part of the Road Transport Industry Training Board.

- Industry thus saw most ITBs as bureaucratic, tax raising bodies, not fully relevant to the needs of training.

3.1.21

In the 1980s also, new initiatives affected adult training. The Open Tech programme (paragraphs 3.4.38 - 3.4.40) provided the impetus for the widespread use of open learning in both education and industry. The Department of Education and Science launched the PICKUP programme to make use of the national investment in the college structure.

3.1.22

From 1988, there was a gradual transformation of MSC from being a quasi-independent agency responsible for training to being a directorate of the Employment Department. This change underlined the gradual abandonment of the interventionist policies of the 1960s, and the greater reliance on market forces and other pressures to ensure the level of training needed by a modern economy.

Qualifications

3.1.23

The drive to increase competence in the workforce led to an attempt to rationalise vocational qualifications by the creation in 1986 of the National Council for Vocational Qualifications. In Scotland the Scottish Vocational Education Council (SCOTVEC) was formed in 1985 by the Secretary of State by the amalgamation of SCOTEC and SCOTBEC - two vocational awarding bodies. SCOTVEC became the national body in Scotland with responsibility for developing, awarding and accrediting vocational qualifications. Later developments are described in Chapter 5.

3.1.24

The intention was for vocational qualifications to be based on competences, i.e. on statements of what a worker could do, and so on outcomes rather than the process of education and training. Although many vocational qualifications had been moving in this direction since the 1970s, the combination of a comprehensive structure based on outcomes, and insistence on relevance to the workplace, was seen by some as a revolution.

3.1.25

Responsibility for these statements of competence rested with 'Lead Bodies' for industrial sectors and occupations. Many of the Lead Bodies had been drawn from the Non-Statutory Training Organisations (NSTOs) which replaced the Industrial Training Boards. Thus the employers in a sector were intended to be, and were seen to be, the originators of statements of competence (paragraphs 3.2.9 to 3.2.15).

Involving industry

3.1.26

One of the continuing problems in the UK has been the comparative lack of interest which employers (especially small enterprises) have shown in the provision of training (with many honourable exceptions). In 1989, the government, in an attempt to overcome this attitude by structural reform, announced the creation of 82 locally based Training and Enterprise Councils in England and Wales, and 22 Local Enterprise Companies in Scotland. These TECs and LECs would give local industry the responsibility for training, and would enable local training needs to be met more effectively (see paragraphs 3.2.16 to 3.2.19).

3.1.27
UK governments have traditionally taken the view that training is the responsibility of employers. The interpretation of 'responsibility' has varied. Since the late 1980s the policy was that employers should take the lead in all aspects of training. The main employers' organisation, the Confederation of British Industry, has had an important input to many of the changes. The concept of involvement of social partners, by the inclusion of trade unions in policy making, or by working through federations of industrial bodies, was not seen as having been a success in the interventionist stage of the history of British training. The present government has restated the principle that employers should pay for training which benefits their businesses.

Northern Ireland

3.1.28
Eight Industrial Training Boards (ITBs) in Northern Ireland were established originally under the Industrial Training Act (NI) 1964 and subsequently the Industrial Training (NI) Order 1984. The Boards operated under legislation similar to that in Great Britain.

3.1.29
The ITBs were serviced until 1 July 1990 by an umbrella organisation the Northern Ireland Training Authority (NITA) which also had powers to review the training needs of industry, including carrying out research and developing and promoting new techniques of training in new technology. The functions of NITA were then transferred to the Training and Employment Agency (T&EA) and the ITBs encouraged to establish themselves as private sector training organisations. However the Construction Industry Training Board (NI) remains a statutory board.

Figure 14: Development of vocational education and training in the United Kingdom

1944	Education Act
1945 ▼ 1957	
1958	Carr Report: Training for Skill
1959	
1960	
1961	White Paper: Better Opportunities in Technical Education
1962	
1963	
1964	Industrial Training Act (similar Act in Northern Ireland)
1965 ▼ 1968	
1969	27 Statutory Industrial Training Boards established by this year
1970 ▼ 1972	
1973	Employment and Training Act Manpower Services Commission (MSC) formed
1974 ▼ 1980	
1981	MSC's New Training Initiative
1982	Open Tech programme started
1983	Youth Training Scheme started
1984	
1985	SCOTVEC formed
1986	National Council for Vocational Qualifications formed
1987	Open College formed
1988	Abolition of MSC Employment Training started Education Reform Act
1989	TECs and LECs established
1990	Youth Training introduced
1991	
1992	Further Education Funding Council established
1993	Careers Services transferred from local authority control to Department for Education
1994	Training for Work replaced Employment Training
1995	Merger of Department for Education and Employment Department to become Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) Modern Apprenticeships launched
1996	Unitary authorities introduced Review of Qualifications of 16-19 Year Olds (report)
1997	Merger of SCOTVEC and Scottish Examinations Board to form Scottish Qualifications Authority Merger of NCVQ and Schools Curriculum Assessment Authority to form Qualifications and Curriculum Authority Higher Education in the Learning Society (report) Consultation on National Grid for Learning National Traineeships launched National Training Organisations introduced
1998	School Standards and Framework Act New Deal launched Lifelong Learning Green Paper Pathfinder Prospectus for UfI
1999	First elections to Scottish and Welsh Assemblies White Paper: Learning to Succeed

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3.2 Common elements for initial and continuing vocational education and training

Introduction

3.2.1
In the UK, government responsibilities and policies for vocational education and training and the infrastructure for implementing these policies are the same for initial and for continuing vocational education and training. Statistics on job-related training for employees also tend to cover those of working age (16-64 for men and 16-59 for women). In this section, therefore, the common elements for vocational education and training are described first, followed by specific descriptions of the initial and of the continuing vocational education and training systems.

Government responsibility for vocational training

3.2.2
Government responsibility for vocational education and training is exercised formally by different government departments in the different component parts of the United Kingdom. Thus overall responsibility for policy and finance rested with the Secretary of State for Education and Employment in England, but with the Secretaries of State for Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland in the rest of the United Kingdom. In 1999 these responsibilities were devolved to the new executives responsible to the Assemblies in Wales and Scotland. Some responsibilities which are relevant to the development of training are exercised by the President of the Board of Trade, and by the Secretaries of State for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, for Health and Social Service, for Environment, Transport and the Regions and for Defence. There is, however, a degree of coordination exercised by the Secretary of State for Education and Employment.

Vision and strategies

3.2.3
The government's vision is of lifelong learning for all. In *The Learning Age* Green Paper published in March 1998 it endorses a quotation from *Learning for the Twenty First Century* (the first report of the National Advisory Group for Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning: November 1997):

> *The country needs to develop a new learning culture, a culture of lifelong learning for all. It is essential to help ....all of its people meet the challenge they now face as they move towards the twenty-first century.*

Its reasoning is that:

> *To continue to compete, we must equip ourselves to cope with the enormous economic and social change we face, to make sense of the rapid transformation of the world, and to encourage imagination and innovation.*

The most productive investment will be linked to the best educated and best trained workforces, and the most effective way of getting and keeping a job will be to have the skills needed by employers.

Our vision of the Learning Age is about more than employment. The development of a culture of learning will help to build a united society, assist in the creation of personal independence, and encourage our creativity and innovation.

3.2.4

The important point is that the vision of lifelong learning for all encompasses all ages; it does not merely use 'lifelong' as a euphemism for 'adult education'. Implementation may be different for initial VET and for adult and continuing VET, but even so the boundaries are blurred. The whole emphasis on widening access encompasses both young people and adults. More specifically, the government is committed to widening access to Further Education, especially from those groups who do not now benefit from it. Ambitious targets were proposed in a report *Learning Works*, prepared for the Further Education Funding Council. The government has not so far committed the very large sums required to meet these targets as it has been awaiting the results (due in autumn 1998) of a Comprehensive Spending Review by all departments. However, it has committed itself to provide for an extra 500 000 young people and adults by 2002, and in summer 1998 funds had been allocated for this.

Targets

3.2.5

The government has set National Targets for Education and Training. These targets are monitored by the National Advisory Council for Education and Training Targets (NACETT) in England and Wales and the Advisory Scottish Council for Education and Training Targets (ASCETT) in Scotland (see also Annex 5). There are similar, but separate, targets for Northern Ireland. The aim of the national targets is

To improve the UK's international competitiveness by raising standards and attainment levels in education and training to world class levels through ensuring that:

1. *All employers invest in employee development to achieve business success.*
2. *All individuals have access to education and training opportunities, leading to recognised qualifications, which meet their needs and aspirations.*
3. *All education and training develops self-reliance, flexibility and breadth, in particular through fostering competence in core skills.*

3.2.6

Targets are of two types:

- **The Foundation Targets** show what young people need to achieve through the school and further education system (see paragraphs 3.3.7 to 3.3 9)
- **The Lifetime Targets** encourage employers and individuals to invest continuously in training and development; and seek to make the workforce at least as highly skilled as those of foreign competitors (see paragraph 3.4.8).

3.2.7

In 1998 the current targets were under review following a consultation process. This also applied to targets in Scotland and Northern Ireland. The results of the reviews were due to be announced in the second half of 1998.

Overview of the vocational training infrastructure

3.2.8

The organisation of vocational education and training in Great Britain has become diffused because authority has been given to a large number of bodies with varying levels of autonomy. Between them, these are responsible for the organisation of vocational education and training by:

- **Industrial sectors and occupations:** the responsibility currently lies with National Training Organisations (NTOs), some created by statute, but now almost all non-statutory (see paragraphs 3.2.9 to 3.2.15)
- **Geographical location:** the responsibility lies with Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) in England and Wales, and Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and their respective networks of Local Enterprise Companies (LECs) in Scotland (see paragraphs 3.2.16 to 3.2.19 and Annex 5)
- **Delivery of vocational education and training:** this is the responsibility of nearly 450 colleges in England (and some 45 in Scotland, 35 in Wales and 17 in Northern Ireland), several hundred managing agents (some of which may be colleges), private enterprise training organisations and, not least, employers themselves (see paragraphs 3.2.20 to 3.2.34)
- **Guidance:** is provided by over 60 careers services, which are no longer under local authority control (see paragraphs 3.2.35 to 3.2.39)
- **Award of qualifications:** in England, Wales and Northern Ireland a large number of awarding bodies (ABs) are responsible for awarding qualifications, some of which are subject to accreditation by the Qualification and Curriculum Authority (QCA). In Scotland, the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) is responsible for developing and accrediting Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs). A full account is given in section 5.1. Although it is not a qualification, the National Record of Achievement (NRA) has similar characteristics in providing evidence of achievements (see paragraphs 3.2.44 to 3.2.49)
- **Information Technology:** especially the National Grid for Learning which, while starting in the schools, will become part of the vocational education infrastructure (see paragraphs 3.2.40 to 3.2.43), but also a number of initiatives which are considered under continuing vocational education and training (see paragraphs 3.4.58 and 3.4.59).
- **Research:** there is no overall authority for research, which is normally funded by government departments and undertaken by institutions, specialist bodies or consultants (see paragraphs 5.3.1 to 5.3.3).

As an understanding of the relationships between these different bodies is crucial for understanding the system as a whole, their role is expanded on in the following paragraphs, while the rather different position in Northern Ireland is described in paragraphs 3.2.31 to 3.2.34.

Industrial sectors and occupations

3.2.9

The delegation of responsibility for training to industrial sectors derived largely from the Industrial Training Act 1964, under which 27 statutory Industrial Training Boards (ITBs) were created. Since 1989 the ITBs have progressively been replaced by Non-Statutory Training Organisations (NSTOs) later redesignated Industry Training Organisations (ITOs), of which there were some 150 in 1996, while only two statutory ITBs remain. The ITOs typically covered much smaller industrial sectors than the predecessor ITBs. While the ITBs were able to raise funds from their industrial sectors by a levy imposed under the 1964 Industrial Training Act, the ITOs depended on membership fees and the sale of their services. They tended, therefore, to be fairly small bodies. The National Council for Industrial Training Organisations (NCITO) acted as a focal point for ITOs.

3.2.10

One of the continuing aims of government policy has been to increase the standards of competence exercised by those employed in all occupations. This is achieved by a qualification system which identifies occupational competences and the criteria which indicate whether an acceptable standard of performance has been achieved (performance criteria). This identification was undertaken by Lead Bodies (LBs) for each industry, of which there were some 160. Many of these were ITOs, but some Lead Bodies (e.g. for office skills) were specially created by the Employment Department. After 1995, some of the numerous lead bodies were amalgamated into rather fewer Occupational Standards Councils (OSC).

3.2.11

During 1997 ITOs, LBs and OSCs were invited to amalgamate and turn themselves into National Training Organisations (NTOs), which are still non-statutory but are recognised by the Secretary of State. This process was continued during 1998, with 56 NTOs recognised by May 1998 (71 in November 1999). NCITO has been relaunched as the NTO National Council.

3.2.12

NTO status is awarded by the Secretary of State for Education and Employment following scrutiny of bids by a Recognition Panel using specific criteria raising questions concerning a strategic approach, employer involvement, relationships with partners and Great Britain wide coverage, before recommending recognition.

3.2.13

NTOs have key roles in:

- defining occupational standards
- advising on key skills required in occupational areas
- advising on the assessment methods most appropriate to vocational qualifications in their sector

- encouraging the use of NVQs/SVQs, for sector targets within the revised National Targets for Education and Training
- forming the basis of the cross-sector advisory groups that will advise QCA on the current and future needs of industry sectors, and the portfolio of courses and qualifications that will meet those needs
- promoting the wider use of occupational standards
- developing and improving Modern Apprenticeships and providing guidance on National Traineeships.

3.2.14
One of the most important aspects of the new NTO network is the emphasis on partnerships. The main partners of NTOs so far have been TECs and the QCA but creating close links with colleges is likely to be vital. And there are many other bodies and initiatives in education and training where a partnership approach is likely to reap dividends.

3.2.15
In Scotland the equivalent of the NTO National Council, SCONTO, will have a key role in helping the NTO network to operate effectively in Scotland, working in partnership with bodies such as CBI Scotland, the Scottish TUC, Scottish Enterprise and Highlands & Islands Enterprise.

Localisation: TECs and LECs

3.2.16
The localisation of responsibility for training dates from 1989 when the then Secretary of State for Employment started to establish a system of Training and Enterprise Councils in England and Wales which was completed in 1991. In England TECs are funded by the Department for Education and Employment through 10 regional Government Offices, and in Wales by the Welsh Office. In Scotland the Secretary of State for Scotland set up two new enterprise bodies: Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise in April 1991, each with training, enterprise and environmental responsibilities, implemented through networks of Local Enterprise Companies (LECs), which were established at the same time. The ideas behind the creation of TECs and LECs were influenced by the Private Industry Councils (PICs) in the USA and the purpose was to involve local industry in the identification of training needs and the organisation of training. Their responsibilities include organising training programmes for young people entering the labour force and for the adult unemployed, which had previously been run by the then Employment Department (see Annex 5 for later developments).

3.2.17
Initially members of the boards of TECs had to be chief executives of enterprises. Now at least two thirds of the board members of Local Enterprise Companies must occupy senior management positions in business. LECs are required to have a majority of board members who are chief executives of business (at least 8 out of 12). People from other backgrounds may take up the remaining board places but no other groups (e.g. professional personnel staff, senior educationalists and trade

unionists) were originally eligible for board places as of right. However, the present government is widening the representation on TEC boards.

3.2.18

The boundaries of TECs often, but not always, coincide with local authority boundaries, although in large urban areas a TEC may encompass several local authorities. In Scotland, the boundaries of the LECs coincide with local council boundaries. Originally there were 82 TECs and 22 LECs, but one TEC in London was abolished (and its functions given to neighbouring TECs) because of financial insolvency, and others have amalgamated; there are now 79. There are moves to decrease the number of TECs, particularly in London.

3.2.19

TECs have to produce business plans for approval by the Department for Education and Employment in order to obtain their funding. Similarly LECs produce business plans for approval by Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise. These plans set out specific targets and objectives for the community within the boundaries of that TEC or LEC, and include programmes for the unemployed and disadvantaged. TECs and LECs are also able to bid for specific projects funded by the central government.

Delivery of VET

3.2.20

Vocational education and training is delivered partly by the further education system through colleges of further education and partly by employers, who may organise their own off-the-job or on-the-job training, or use facilities offered by local colleges or private training organisations, or NTOs.

3.2.21

A very high proportion of training, including both on-the-job and off-the-job and placements for trainees on government programmes, is provided by employers. Employers may provide induction training for new entrants, for the upgrading of staff, or for the development of new skills as new products or processes are introduced.

3.2.22

The Further Education sector in England comprises 444 further education and sixth form colleges. All these institutions were maintained by local education authorities until 1992, but the Education Act 1992 made them incorporated bodies completely independent of local authorities. One of the policies of the present government is to improve the accountability of colleges in the FE sector, through redefining the membership of the 'corporations' (governing bodies) of colleges, with future categories of membership as follows:

- at least one and a maximum of three members nominated and elected by staff
- at least one and a maximum of three members nominated and elected by students
- at least one and a maximum of three members nominated by a local authority

and the removal of all restrictions on the number of other members who may have a local authority connection

- at least one and a maximum of three members nominated by local community bodies
- one third of the total membership (rounded down) to be business members, including one business member nominated by the local TEC
- the principal
- not more than three co-opted members
- at Sixth Form Colleges, one or two members who are parents of students at the college aged up to 19. At other colleges, some of which have substantial numbers of students aged up to 19, there should in future be the option to have not more than two parent members.

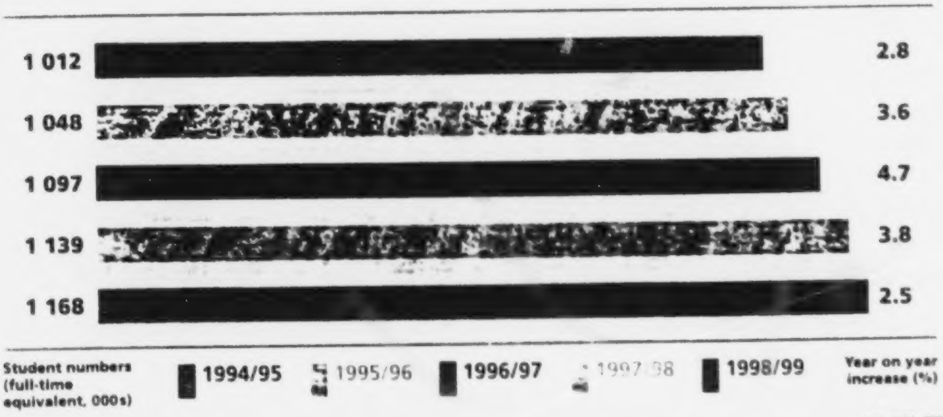
3.2.23

In 1992 the government established the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) and the Further Education Funding Council for Wales (FEFCW). These are responsible for funding and maintaining quality in further education and sixth form colleges. The general policy, as expressed through FEFC, is to increase the numbers of students and the quality of education which they are receiving while reducing the unit cost per student (see also Annex 5).

3.2.24

The following table shows the planned increase in student numbers in the FE sector in England from 1994/95 to 1998/99; these do not include any increases planned by the present government to 2002 (see paragraph 3.2.4).

Figure 15. **Student numbers in further education 1994/95 to 1998/99**



SOURCE **FEFC**

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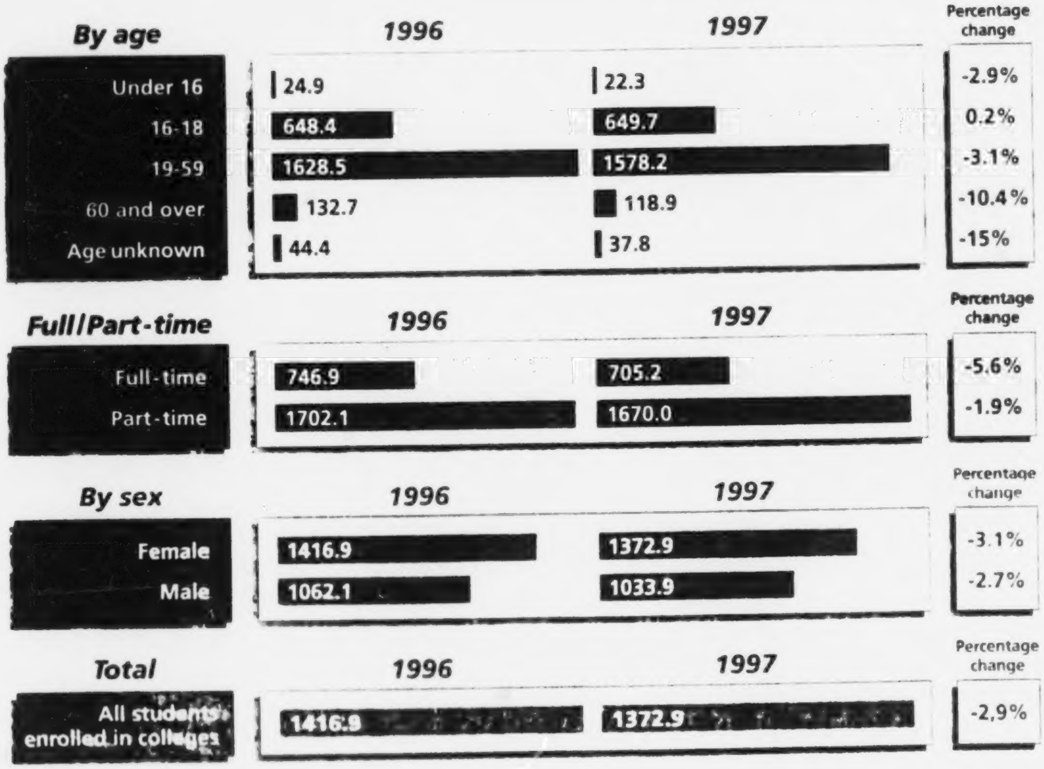
3.2.25

Most of the colleges of general further education are multi-technical institutions with several thousand students, offering courses for a very wide range of occupations and at a number of different levels. Indeed a few offer provision which ranges from the most basic level of skills to post-graduate studies.

3.2.26

FEFC collects statistics from the sector by the individualised student record (ISR). It thus has very rich and authoritative data. The figure below shows all students (full-time/part-time) enrolled in the FE sector colleges by age and gender on 1 November 1996 and 1997.

Figure 16. **Students in FE, by age and sex, 1 November 1996 and 1997 (000s)**



SOURCE **FEFC**

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3.2.27
The table below shows the number of FEFC funded students (i.e. a smaller total than in the table above) by programme area in 1995/96.

Table 12. **FEFC funded students by programme area, 1995/96**

Science	41 180
Agriculture	42 600
Construction	90 500
Engineering	245 900
Business	601 800
Hotel & Catering	142 500
Health and Community Care	378 100
Art and Design	206 000
Humanities	678 000
Basic Education *	233 300

* Literacy, numeracy, IT core skills

SOURCE **FEFC ANNUAL REPORT 1995/96**

3.2.28
The main programmes for young and adult unemployed are run by training providers (colleges or private providers) under contract to the TECs and LECs. These are subject to inspection by the Training Standards Council.

3.2.29
In addition, there are a large number of private organisations which specialise in training in small ranges of subjects and at defined trainee levels, particularly in management, computing, driving instruction, languages, hairdressing, catering. Some of these also act as training providers for government programmes.

3.2.30
In Scotland the 45 or so further education colleges are now free-standing corporate bodies with direct funding from the Scottish Education Office, but a Further Education Funding Council for Scotland will be established in 1999.

Northern Ireland

3.2.31
In Northern Ireland from April 1990 the Training and Employment Services of the Department of Economic Development (DED) were established as an executive agency, the Training and Employment Agency (T&EA), within DED. The agency also took over responsibility for the functions of the Northern Ireland Training Authority and the Northern Ireland Industrial Training Boards.

3.2.32
Each of the key sectors of industry has formed a sector representative body (SRB) which represents the opinions of employers, and other parties, about individual sector training needs. A number of sectors have established training organisations,

which operate on a commercial basis providing training and assistance within sectors.

3.2.33

T&EA's Mission Statement is *to develop a world class workforce in Northern Ireland*, whilst its corporate aim is *to assist economic development and help people find sustainable employment through training and employment services delivered on the basis of equality of opportunity*.

3.2.34

T&EA's network of training centres (10 in summer 1998) located across Northern Ireland provide off-the-job industrial skills training for young persons and adults. The centres also provide sponsored training for industry where an individual company identifies a particular training need or problem; a package tailored to the company's specific needs can be designed. Subject to the expertise available, this training can be provided in the training centre or in-company. As in Great Britain, vocational education and training is provided by 17 FE colleges, which were the responsibility of the Education and Library Boards but became autonomous in April 1998. A 1998 review of the role of training centres and FE colleges in vocational training concluded that there was significant overlap of provision and competition between the two networks for recruitment and resources. New arrangements for partnerships were to be announced in autumn 1998.

Guidance

3.2.35

The Trades Union Reform and Employment Rights Act 1993 transferred responsibility for Careers Services from Local Education Authority control and placed them with the Secretary of State for Education and Employment. There are currently 66 Careers Services operating under contract in England. These were appointed after a tendering procedure, but there are indications that when the contracts (3-5 years in duration) come up for renewal, they may be awarded on a 'preferred supplier' basis. This may give a greater guarantee of continuity to services which perform well. The new arrangements have led to interesting and imaginative arrangements, but there is no national pattern.

3.2.36

Similar legislative action was taken to reform the Careers Services in Wales and Scotland.

3.2.37

In Wales, funding for the Careers Service was increased by a third in 1995/96 and maintained at that level in 1996/97. This has enabled all young people in the 13-14 age group to benefit from three group sessions over the two periods. Those aged 15 will have a minimum of two group sessions and are offered an individual interview leading to the production of an action plan. 20 % of both cohorts have access to individual guidance interviews. Young people in the first two years of post-compulsory education (in school or college) receive a guidance interview, leading to an action plan where appropriate, and one group session per year.

3.2.38
Careers services in Scotland now deliver guidance to their client groups under direct contracts between the Scottish Office and careers service companies jointly formed between education authorities and LECs.

3.2.39
The Careers Service in Northern Ireland is administered by the Training and Employment Agency.

Information technology: the National Grid for Learning

3.2.40
In October 1997 the government published a consultative document on the National Grid for Learning, an initiative which aims to link all educational establishments, and potentially homes, to ICT networks. Although priority is being given to schools, the intention is then to move to post-school education.

3.2.41
Targets relevant to VET which are set out in the consultation document include:

- by 2002 all schools, colleges, universities and libraries and as many community centres as possible should be connected to the Grid, enabling some 75% of teachers and lecturers and 50% of pupils and students to use their own e-mail addresses by then
- by 2002 most school leavers should have a good understanding of ICT, based firmly on the standards prescribed in the curricula operating in the various parts of the UK, and there should be measures in place for assessing the level of school leavers' competence in ICT
- by 2002 the UK should be a centre for excellence in the development of networked software content for education and lifelong learning, building upon a strong private sector educational software industry, and be a world leader in the export of learning services
- from 2002 general administrative communications to schools and further and higher education bodies by the UK Education Departments, the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), and non-departmental public bodies, and the collection of data from schools, should largely cease to be paper-based.

3.2.42
Other elements of this document relevant to VET are:

- the collection of statistics by the UK Education Departments should be focused on assessing progress towards achieving the new targets for ICT and the implementation of the Grid and avoiding false impressions based on obsolete equipment
- as measures are put in place to implement the Grid, the relevant national bodies should begin work on reassessing the place of ICT within the curricula operating in the various parts of the UK, and in the assessment and examination system,

and on developing new arrangements for the use of ICT in assessment and examinations - particularly those leading to vocational qualifications

- all publicly-funded bodies, including museums, galleries, libraries, universities and research institutions and public service broadcasters should be strongly encouraged to record in their published plans and annual reports progress in making available information and content for the Grid.

3.2.43
The content of the Grid is expected to include:

- educational software packages, professionally produced by expert programmers
- software and content produced by teachers, lecturers and trainers, including both products intended for use by their pupils and students, and the teaching, administrative and planning material that professionals themselves might share
- published resources available via networks - these include both resources available free from agencies with a role to disseminate information and those from commercial publishers
- TV and film media resources, again including both commercially and non-commercially provided material.

National Record of Achievement

3.2.44
The National Record of Achievement (NRA) was launched in 1991 as a lifetime record of achievement to support self development, for all, throughout life. It was based on previous initiatives, where reviewing, recording and action planning were motivating people to learn and helping them to progress. The government provides it free to all 16 year olds leaving school, Youth Trainees, Modern Apprentices and those in Training for Work. Five million have been issued to date.

3.2.45
The NRA is both a **document** and the underpinning **processes** of reviewing, recording and planning. All achievements can be recorded: formal (and partial) qualifications and informal experience and achievements. The NRA encourages individuals to undertake a cycle of review and reflection and future planning.

3.2.46
The NRA

- is owned, compiled and updated by the individual, usually with support from another person, but it is not an award;
- encompasses academic, vocational and personal spheres of achievement, whether actual or planned;

- summarises past and present achievements;
- helps plan learning and set targets for future achievement;
- provides organised and well presented information;
- contains evidence of achievements, for example, photographs and certificates;
- motivates further achievement through acknowledging existing skills.

3.2.47
The NRA's purpose is

- to motivate individuals to learn throughout life and
- to develop the skills of planning and taking responsibility for one's own learning.

3.2.48
The NRA is an information source, owned and used by the individual and shared selectively with others. It can, for example, be used for

- preparing for an interview or a new job
- appraisal
- promotion
- planning future training or qualifications
- planning and training for retirement or redundancy.

3.2.49
However, National Records of Achievement are currently used more in schools than in FE, HE, training or employment. It is also thought that the NRA is not meeting its potential as a system of lifelong self development. There are therefore plans to make it more effective.

Summary of responsibilities

3.2.50
The following figure gives a broad summary of the authorities responsible for different elements of education and training. A figure of this nature is inevitably a simplification.

Figure 17. Responsible authorities

Responsible authorities →	NATIONAL	REGIONAL	SUB REGIONAL	ORGANISATION/ INSTITUTION
Young entrants to work	1	2	4	
	6 7		4	(10) (11) (12)
	7			
			4 (9)	(10)
				10 11
				10 11 12
				[illegible]
				12
Higher level training	1 (3)	2		
	7			
	7		9	
	3			(10)
				10 11
				10 12
	8			10 12
Retraining of adults in work	1 (3)	2		
				(10) (11) (12)
	3		(9)	(10)
				10 11 12
				[illegible]
	8			10 12
				12
Training for the unemployed	1	2	5	
			4	
				[illegible]
	3		5 (4) 9	
				10 11
				10
				12

Responsible authorities:

1. Department for Education and Employment/Scottish Office/Welsh Office/Department for Economic Development, Northern Ireland/Department for Education for Northern Ireland
2. Scottish Assembly/Welsh Assembly/Northern Ireland Assembly/Regional Development Agencies in England
3. University for Industry
4. TECs/LECs
5. Employment Service
6. NTOs for sectors and occupations
7. QCA, SQA; awarding bodies
8. Open Learning Foundation; other national publishers and providers of Open Learning
9. Careers services
10. Education institutions
11. Private sector training centres
12. Individual firms and organisations

( ) Organisation does not have a major role

Function

Regulation and coordination of system

Determination of content

Assessment and Certification

Information and Guidance

Delivery through

education institution or training centre only

alternance and day release

self study

workplace only

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3.3 Initial vocational education and training

Overview: Individual options and government strategies

3.3.1
At the end of compulsory education at the age of 16, a young person has a number of positive options:

- to stay at school
- to continue in full-time education at a college
- to go on a government-supported training scheme (Modern Apprenticeships, National Traineeships, Other Training, previously known as Youth Training)
- to enter employment and be trained by the employer, but not on a government-supported scheme.

3.3.2
There are also less positive options:

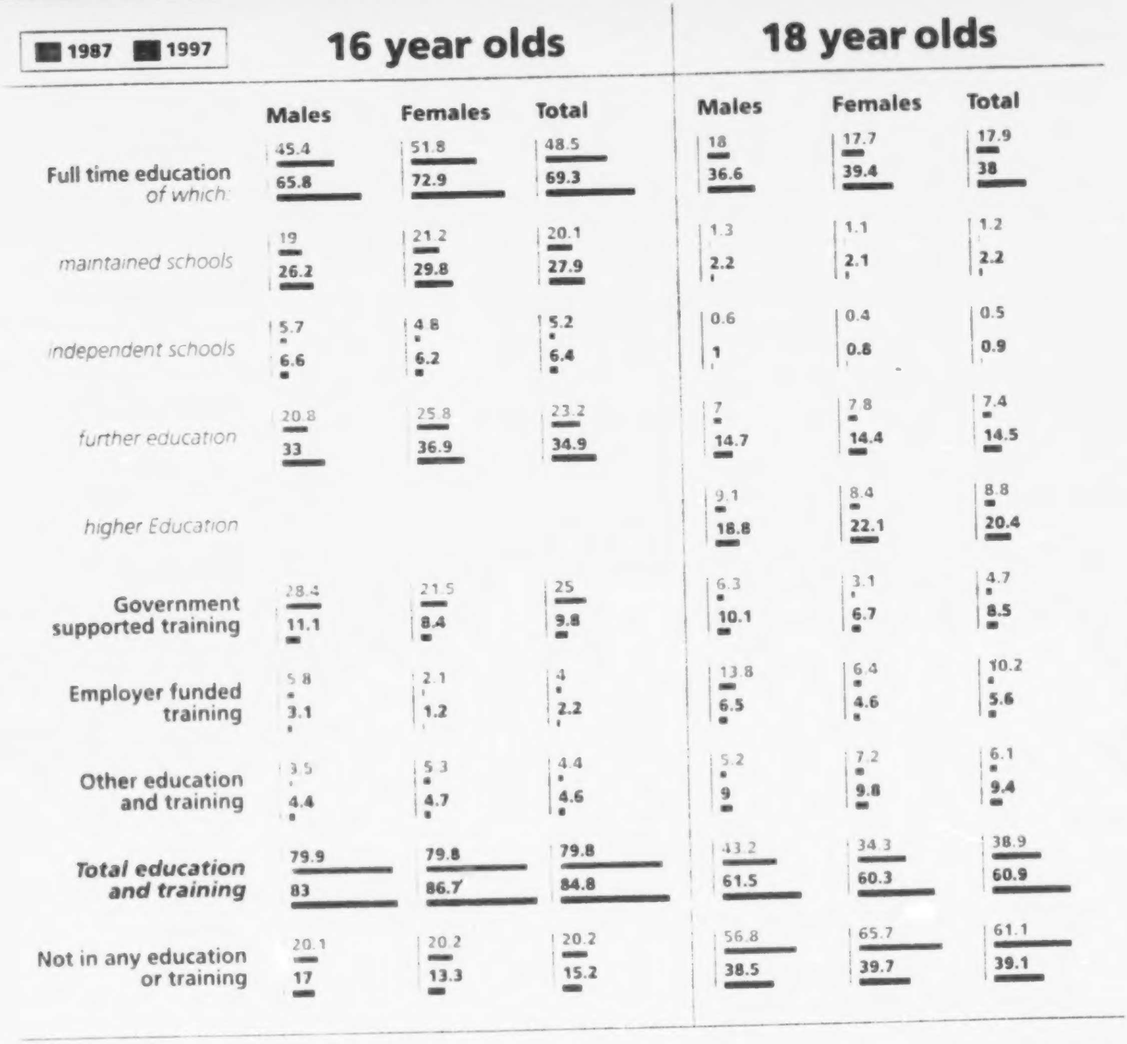
- to enter employment which does not provide training
- to be unemployed.

3.3.3
At the age of 18 there are similar options (although few remain at school), and in addition the possibility of entry to higher education.

3.3.4
Over the decade 1987-1997, for both the 16 year old and 18 year old age groups, there has been

- an enormous rise in those staying on in full-time education, especially in further and higher education
- a decline in employer funded training
- a rise in government funded training
- a decline in numbers not in any education or training.

Figure 18. **Percentage of 16 and 18 year olds at the end of 1987 and 1997 who followed the various options.**



SOURCE **DfEE JUNE 1998**

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Figure 19. **Options followed by 16 year olds at end of compulsory education, 1997 and (in brackets) 1987 in %**

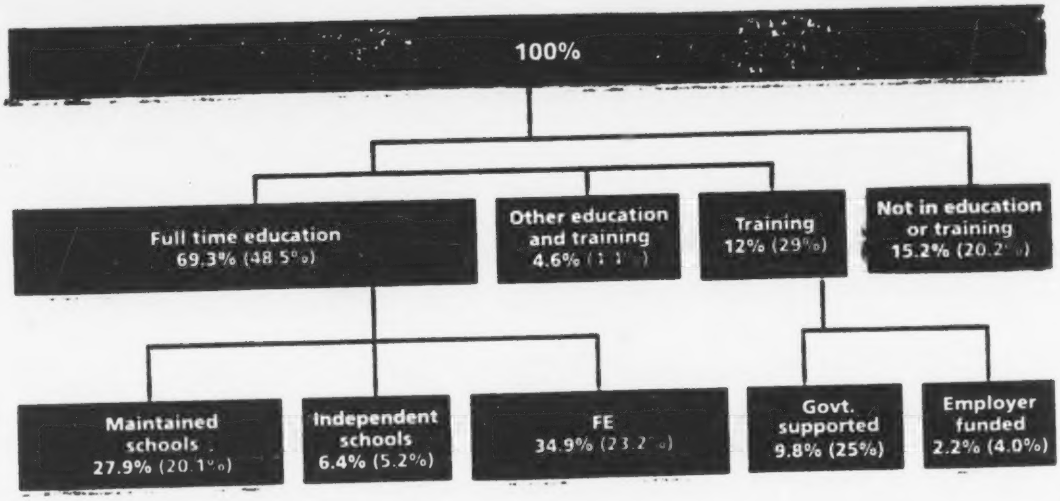
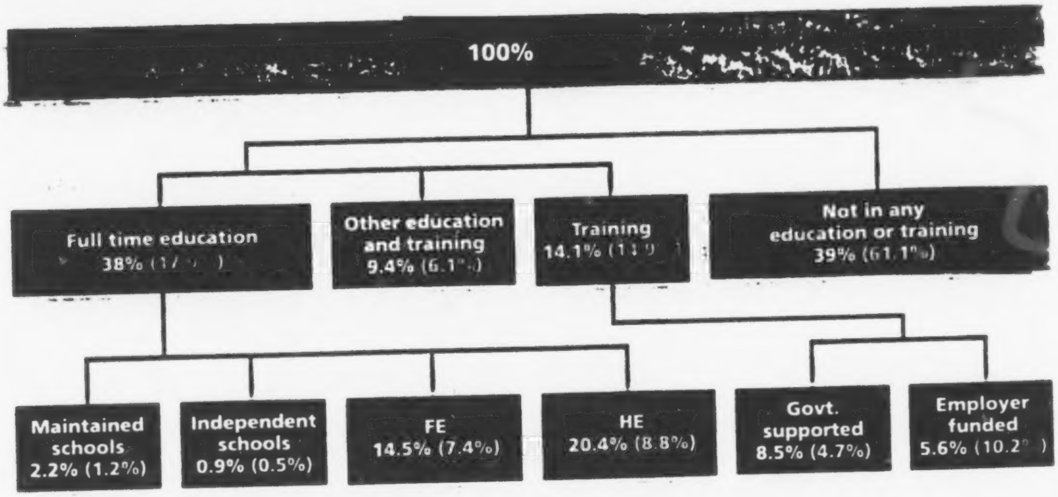


Figure 20. **Options followed by 18 year olds 1997 and (in brackets) 1987, in%**



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3.3.5

In order to reinforce the positive options, and counter the less positive ones, the government in 1997 published *Investing in young people*, a strategy for the education and training of 16-18 year olds. This brings together ten key measures, some of which start before the age of 16. These measures are:

1. All schools to set targets for raising attainment at age 16.
2. Widening the range of vocational options and the work relevance of the curriculum for 14-16 year olds. This includes Part One GNVQs (see paragraph 2.5.10).
3. Introducing a single school leaving date at the end of June each year, so that no child should be able to leave school in the year they become sixteen, until they have had a chance to sit for GCSE or other external examinations.
4. Measures to help young people plan and manage their own learning - including a new National Record of Achievement (see paragraphs 3.2.44 to 3.2.49).
5. The introduction of a Learning Card, promoting young people's entitlement to continuing in learning post-16. The card will:
    - make more young people more aware of their entitlement to learning, and of the choice of qualifications and providers available;
    - strengthen their motivation to learn;
    - offer renewed opportunity to those who may have missed out on, or been unsuccessful in, their post-16 learning experiences.
6. Refocusing the Careers Service to target support and guidance on those who need it most.
7. Developing the New Start strategy to re-engage disaffected young people from age 14 upwards in learning, where they have already dropped out or are in danger of doing so.
8. Legislating to ensure that all young employees, with the support of their employer, can undertake education and training up to NVQ Level 2. This legislation has yet to be promulgated.
9. Developing National Traineeships as a high-quality work-based road to NVQ Level 2, including key skills (see paragraphs 3.3.19 and 3.3.20).
10. Raising standards by improving the quality of all post-16 provision; setting targets, identifying success, spreading good practice, and eliminating failure.

3.3.6

The government has also launched the New Deal for unemployed 18-24 year olds (see paragraphs 3.3.39 to 3.3.47).

Targets

3.3.7

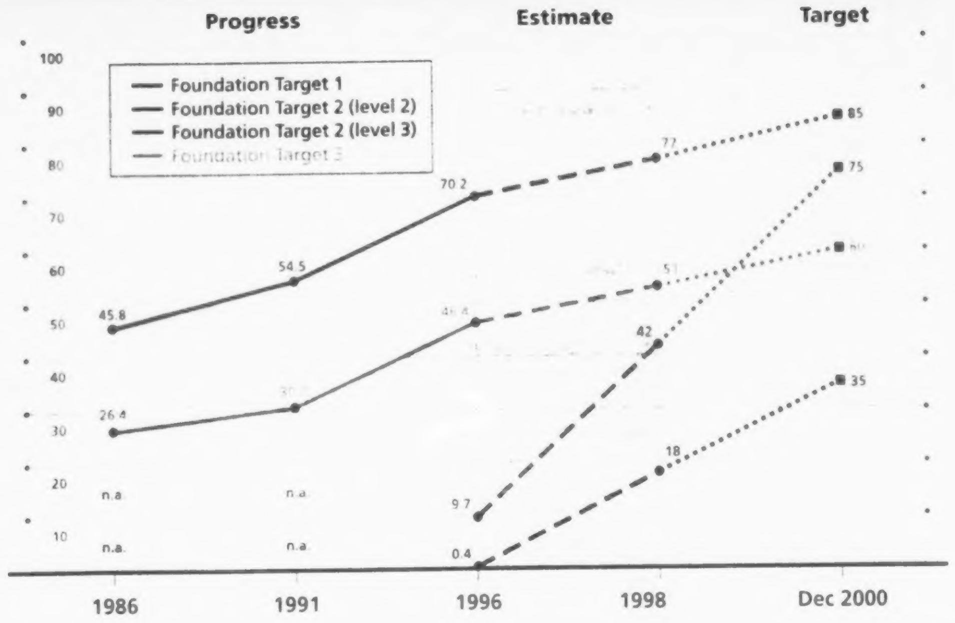
In spring 1998 National Targets for December 2000 (see paragraphs 3.2.5 to 3.2.7) for Foundation Learning were as follows:

- **Foundation Target 1**: by age 19, 85% of young people to achieve five GCSEs/Scottish equivalents at Grade C or above, an Intermediate GNVQ/GSVQ or an NVQ/SVQ Level 2.
- **Foundation Target 2:** 75% (70% in Scotland) of young people to achieve Level 2 (Level 3 in Scotland) competence in communication, numeracy and information technology by age 19; and 35% to achieve Level 3 competence in these core skills by age 21.
- **Foundation Target 3:** by age 21, 60% (70% in Scotland) of young people to achieve two GCE A Levels (Scottish equivalents), an Advanced GNVQ (GSVQ) or NVQ (SVQ) Level 3.

3.3.8

Progress towards the Foundation Targets has been variable, and a great effort will be needed to reach Foundation Target 2, as the following table indicates.

Figure 21. **Progress towards the Foundation Targets (% of age cohort)**



SOURCE NACETT

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3.3.9

The review of the targets (see paragraph 3.2.7) suggested options for post-16 young people as follows:

- a target aimed at 21 year olds, seeking to increase attainment at level 2 and at level 3 (2 A levels, NVQ level 3 or an Advanced GNVQ) or

- a target covering achievement at levels 2 and 3, as above, with an additional element, to encourage participation, aiming for 16-18 year olds to be in some form of structured learning programme working towards at least a level 2 qualification.

Full-time education

3.3.10

Full-time education post-16 may now either be

- academic (see paragraph 2.5.9) or
- vocational.

3.3.11

The main full-time vocational courses lead to General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs) and their Scottish equivalent (GSVQs) (see also Section 5.1.8). GNVQs, which were introduced in 1993, are seen as the vocational alternative to GCE A levels. The structure is as follows:

- **Advanced GNVQs** are equivalent to two GCE A levels and normally take two years of full-time study.

- **Intermediate GNVQs** are equivalent to four to five GCSEs at grades A* -C, and normally take one year full-time.

- **Foundation GNVQs** are equivalent to four GCSEs at grades D-G, and normally take one year of full-time study.

Modern Apprenticeships

3.3.12

Modern Apprenticeships were introduced nationally in 1995 following piloting in 1994. They are designed to increase the number of young people achieving level 3 NVQs (or SVQs in Scotland) plus key skills (and in some cases other qualifications and units) in two or three years. Modern Apprenticeships primarily seek to attract able 16 and 17 year olds but are also available to those aged 18,19 or over.

3.3.13

Modern Apprenticeships have been developed in partnerships between NTOs (previously ITOs) and TECs to provide 'training frameworks', which in summer 1998 had been approved for 77 industrial and commercial sectors, including quite a few which had previously had no tradition of apprenticeships.

They have been introduced in government departments and the armed forces and a framework has been developed for junior managers.

3.3.14

Modern Apprenticeships are supported locally by TECs who work with individual employers to develop training which meets their needs and which follows the approved model for the specific industry sector. The TEC agrees funding levels with each employer according to local arrangements. The government contributes to funding through TECs, but employers normally have to meet the cost of wages, and contribute to training costs.

Employers select Modern Apprentices using guidelines set out in individual sector models and their own recruitment criteria. A training agreement is entered into between the employer and the apprentice; this may provide for release to a college course.

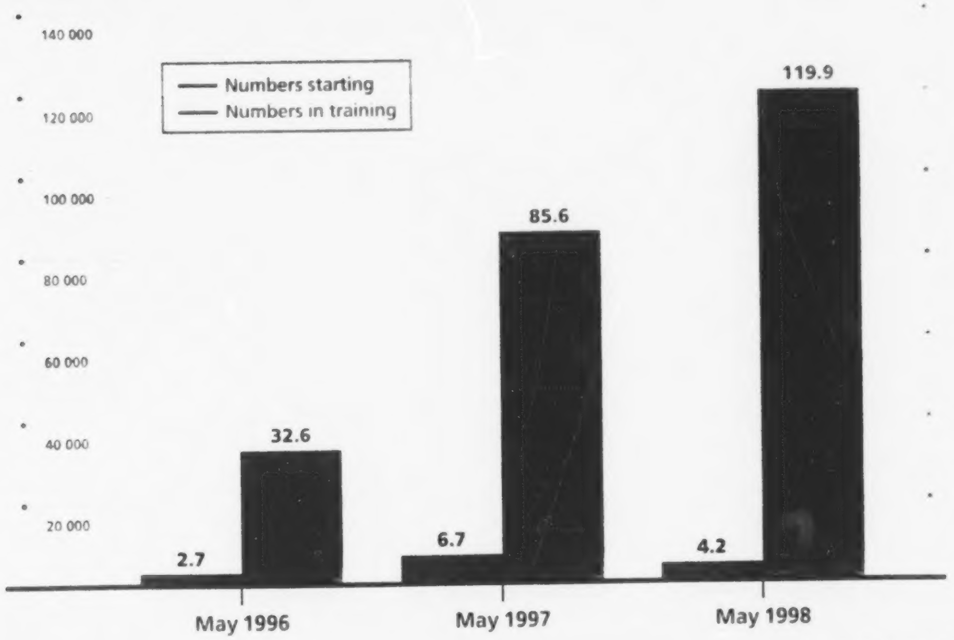
3.3.15

The aim is that wherever possible Modern Apprentices are employed at the start of their training. Wages are a matter between the young persons and their employer. Where employment is not possible, the apprentice is clearly linked to an employer, or group of employers, and paid an allowance.

3.3.16

By May 1998 over 189 000 young people in England and Wales had started Modern Apprenticeships and nearly 120 000 were still in training. By the year 2000 the government expects to see over 60 000 young people each year completing their apprenticeships and qualifying at NVQ Level 3 or above. The next figure shows the growth of Modern Apprenticeships in England and Wales:

Figure 22. **Numbers (thousands) in Modern Apprenticeships (England and Wales), 1996 to 1998**



SOURCE DfEE JULY 1998

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The decline in the number of starts is thought by some to be due to the introduction of the New Deal (see paragraphs 3.3.39 to 3.3.47), which is financially more favourable to employers, even though the training is less good.

3.3.17
The proportion of female starts rose significantly from 32% in the period to March 1996 to 54% in the three months to March 1998. Over the same period the proportion of non-white starters doubled from 3% to 6% (about one third each of African, Caribbean and Asian), and the proportion of those with disabilities rose from 2% to 3%. In the first quarter of 1998 female starters outnumbered male starters in all regions except the South West and Wales, and in the West Midlands there were 60% female starts. The London region had the highest proportion of non-white starts (24%).

3.3.18
As noted in paragraph 3.3.13, 77 sectors had been approved for Modern Apprenticeships, but the fifteen largest sectors account for about 89% of all Modern Apprenticeships. Engineering, with a long tradition of apprenticeship, had the largest proportion but Business Administration, with no tradition but with a large employment base, came a close second. The figure below shows the numbers in training in England and Wales on 31 March 1998 in the 15 largest sectors as a percentage of all Modern Apprenticeships, together with information on the proportions who were female, from ethnic minorities or with disabilities.

Figure 23. **Numbers in Modern Apprenticeships on 31 March 1998 by major sector, gender, ethnicity, disability**

Sector	Number in training on 31 March as percentage of total	Of those in training on 31 March 1998, % who were Female	Ethnic minority	People with disabilities
Engineering Manufacturing	15	4	2	2
Business Administration	14	78	5	4
Motor Industry	8	4	2	3
Retailing	8	56	6	3
Construction	7	2	1	2
Hotel & Catering	6	47	5	2
Hairdressing	6	92	3	4
Electrical Installation Engineering	6	2	2	1
Health & Social Care	5	89	4	3
Accountancy	3	56	4	3
Childcare	3	97	7	3
Information Technology	2	31	9	2
Travel Service	2	85	2	1
Plumbing	1	1	1	2
Sports & Recreation	1	38	2	2
All sectors	100	39	3	3

SOURCE DfEE JUNE 1998

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National Traineeships

3.3.19
From September 1997 the government introduced National Traineeships, which have a similar approach and are designed and delivered in a similar way to Modern Apprenticeships, but with a focus on NVQ level 2 rather than level 3. In March 1998 Training Frameworks for National Traineeships had been approved for 29 sector areas and were under development for a further 38. In the great majority of cases the National Traineeship Frameworks were in the same sector areas as Modern Apprenticeships. It is intended that, as appropriate, there could be progression from National Traineeships to Modern Apprenticeships.

3.3.20
By the beginning of May 1998 there had been some 2200 National Traineeship starts in England and Wales, and approximately the same numbers were in training. More detailed breakdown of the statistics was not available in summer 1998.

Youth Training

3.3.21
Youth Training (YT), which was launched in 1990 to replace the Youth Training Scheme (YTS), is still delivered by training providers under contract to TECs. YT is known by different titles in different TEC areas. YT has been a major element in the provision of education and training for 16-19 year olds, but is now being replaced by Modern Apprenticeships and National Traineeships. In April 1998 it was stated that for statistical purposes the term 'Other Training for young people' would be used instead of YT, but here the original title is kept for convenience.

3.3.22
Youth Training (YT) offers a guarantee of up to two years vocational training for young people not in employment or full-time education from the end of compulsory schooling through to the age of 18. Eligibility for YT (as opposed to the guarantee) is up to the 25th birthday, and YT can also cover young people in employment. YT provides broad based vocational training both on the job and off the job, and planned work experience, and enables trainees (with some exceptions for young people with special training needs) to work towards a qualification equivalent at least to Level 2 in the frameworks established for NVQs and SVQs. Completion of an individual's training plan may take more than two years, especially where the aim is to obtain qualifications at Level 3 or, exceptionally, at Level 4.

3.3.23
YT is delivered through contracts with independent training providers (often private employers) and is based on the achievement of NVQs/SVQs. TECs and LECs are free to develop and deliver patterns and mixes of training best suited to enabling young people to gain qualifications. There is no obligation to maintain the previous national design framework. TECs and LECs may develop hybrid training and education arrangements, for example part-time training and part-time education funded as a total package. All arrangements must meet minimum requirements and lead to NVQs/SVQs or their equivalents.

3.3.24

In addition to occupationally-based training and job-related skills, training programmes may include induction and assessment (usually 13 to 17 weeks), off-the-job training and education, guidance support, health and safety, and review of progress and certification. There are special provisions for trainees with disabilities.

3.3.25

On completion of training, YT trainees are now given a National Record of Achievement (see paragraphs 3.2.44 to 3.2.49); this provides a personal record of what the trainees have achieved during YT, enabling them to demonstrate their abilities for further education or training or to future employers, including the vocational qualifications they have acquired.

3.3.26

Young people on YT increasingly obtained employee status, rising from 17.1% of trainees in June 1988 to 22.3% in March 1989 and 32.6% in March 1990.

3.3.27

There have been significant regional differences in participation rates in YT.

Figure 24. **Numbers in Youth Training (thousands) by Government Office Region in England and Wales, 1991, 1995 and 1997**

	31 March 1991	31 March 1995	31 March 1997
ENGLAND & WALES	209.5	239.5	207.4
North East	19.7	17.2	13.5
North West (including Merseyside)	30.6	44.6	34.8
Yorkshire and the Humber	28.8	26.4	21.9
East Midlands	22.8	22.8	20.0
West Midlands	32.3	26.7	22.5
Eastern	*	21.4	20.3
London	12.7	16.4	15.3
South East	25.8	28.6	24.7
South West	20.5	19.9	19.5
Wales	16.4	15.3	14.8

* Included in East Midlands

SOURCE: *EDUCATION AND TRAINING STATISTICS FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM 1997*

3.3.28

The numbers on Youth Training declined from a peak of over a quarter of a million in 1993/94 to 156 800 at the beginning of May 1998. This fall represents a combination of lower unemployment and a switch to Modern Apprenticeships.

3.3.29

YT had not been entirely successful in terms of access to employment, completion of agreed training or obtaining a qualification:

- The proportion of leavers in the 12 months to October 1997 who were in a job 6 months after leaving the programme was 66% compared with 64% in the preceding 12 months.

- The proportion of November 1996 to October 1997 leavers who completed their agreed training was 55%, compared with 54% in the previous 12 months.

- The proportion of leavers gaining any full or part qualification was 52% for leavers in November 1996 to October 1997, compared with 50% in the previous 12 months. The proportion who gained a full qualification rose slightly from 42% to 44% in the same period.

3.3.30

The more demanding employer-based training available under Modern Apprenticeships and National Traineeships should lead to an improvement in the output results.

Youth Credits

3.3.31

Within the framework of Youth Training, in 1991 the government supported eleven pilot schemes for Training Credits, later called Youth Credits. A Youth Credit is a voucher representing an entitlement to training to Level 2 or Level 3 NVQs/SVQs, the costs of which are met by TECs/LECs. Different TECs adopted different models and different terminology; in some credits varied according to the cost of training; others have a fixed money value, ranging in value from UK£ 750 (1050 ECU) to almost UK£ 5000 (7000 ECU) per young person on vocational education and training. To enable young people to make the most effective use of their credits they receive special guidance from their local Careers Service. The main feature of the Training Credits was that public funding was routed through the individual young person rather than through a training provider. The aim was:

- *to increase young people's motivation to train by giving them choice and control, and showing them the scale of investment available to support their training;*

- *to make training provision more market-oriented because providers are paid according to their ability to attract trainees with credits;*

- *to increase the number of employers, particularly smaller employers, offering structured training to young people.*

3.3.32

Youth Credits, which are known by different names in different areas:

- are now on offer from TECs, and young people are entitled to know about them while still at school
- give access to Modern Apprenticeships or other work-based training leading to NVQs
- represent purchasing power, giving the young person more choice, more responsibility, and more control
- have a financial value, which varies according to the type of training and the individual's needs.

The young person presents the Youth Credit to an employer or training provider in exchange for training. Most Youth Credits are plastic cards, but some are like cheque books or vouchers.

Part-time vocational education

3.3.33

Entrants to the world of work, whether on a Modern Apprenticeship scheme or not, are often given one day a week release by their employer to attend a college. This approach to part-time vocational education, which is well enshrined in the UK tradition (and was virtually made a compulsory prerequisite for obtaining grants from ITBs when they existed) is most successful when it is based on a partnership between the college and the employer aimed at a coherent training programme.

3.3.34

Although NVQs and SVQs are expressed in terms of outcomes and are meant to be divorced from the length of study, the traditions of part-time education still prevail, with courses leading to qualifications mostly taking two years, but often one or three years. For example, a BTEC technician student would often study two years part-time to National Certificate and, if successful, might then be given a further two years part-time study by his or her employer, leading to the Higher National Certificate. Students studying for 'craft level' engineering, catering or office qualifications followed similar, but more diverse, patterns of attendance. The NVQ/SVQ framework allows for infinite variety of attendance patterns, and for different relationships between college study and training at work, but it seems likely that existing patterns of attendance will remain for some time.

Guidance

3.3.35

The Careers Services provide vocational guidance and placement service which:

- helps young people reach well informed, objective and realistic decisions about their employment, education and training;
- helps those young people leaving school, college or training, or are unemployed to find suitable employment, education or training;

- ensures that pupils, students and staff at schools and colleges are aware of the demands that working life makes on people, and of the opportunities it offers them;

- promotes equal opportunities.

3.3.36
Each Careers Service must provide its clients with:

- comprehensive careers information

- advice and guidance when making careers decisions

- a service to refer and place clients into education, training and employment.

3.3.37
Each young person in full-time education or in part-time vocational education has an entitlement to a free advice and guidance service from their local careers service. Careers service staff offer advice on the requirements of further education courses, of training opportunities, of the demands and availability of jobs locally, and on the financial support available to young people whilst they are in education and training or if they are unemployed. The careers guidance offered by the service is impartial, objective and based on the needs of each individual.

3.3.38
Many Careers Services may also have a role to play in helping their local Employment Service to deliver the New Deal for those aged 18-24 (see paragraphs 3.3.39 to 3.3.47).

The New Deal

3.3.39
In 1998 the government introduced a major new scheme for unemployed young people throughout England, Wales and Scotland. The New Deal is intended for young people aged 18-24 who have been unemployed for six months or more and are receiving the Jobseekers Allowance (JSA). It is intended to help them to find work and also to improve their prospects of remaining in employment. It begins with a 'Gateway' process which provides help with job search, careers advice and guidance. Those who do not find unsubsidised jobs then move to one of four options, each of which involves education or training:

- a subsidised job with an employer
- work with the voluntary sector
- full-time education or training
- work in the environmental task force.

3.3.40
The New Deal started in 12 'pathfinder' areas in January 1998 and was introduced nationally from April 1998. Young people normally join as soon as they have claimed JSA for six months. The major responsibility for implementation lies with the Employment Service but there is a strong emphasis on partnerships. Other organisations which play an important role include the Careers Service, local

authorities, voluntary organisations, TECs, LECs and private organisations. Partnerships differ according to the needs of the locality. The lead partner is often the Employment Service, but two private sector organisations were selected to lead the organisation and delivery of the New Deal in Hackney and the City (in London) and in South Humber. The government intends to use *'private sector innovation and energy throughout all aspects of the delivery of New Deal'*.

3.3.41
The 'Gateway' period, which can last between one and four months, is described as *'an intensive period of counselling, advice and guidance'*. It includes help from the Employment Service and opportunities to take advantage of independent careers guidance. One of the aims is to help the young person to move into a job without the need to take up a New Deal option. In order to achieve this, there is the opportunity to reconsider job and career goals and measures, to build employability by improving basic skills or building self confidence and motivation. This period may include short courses to improve employability. During the Gateway period the New Deal also offers, where necessary, specialised help on specific problems such as drug dependency and homelessness. The aim is that the Gateway period should help many young people to move directly into unsubsidised employment. Those young people who remain unemployed will have the opportunity to pursue a place in one of the New Deal options. Young people are helped to decide which options would do most to improve their skills and employment prospects.

3.3.42
The **employment option** is available to a young person who has failed to find an unsubsidised job after two months on the scheme. This option offers a subsidy to the employer of UK£ 60 (80 ECU) a week for 26 weeks for a job with a minimum of 30 hours per week including the equivalent of one day per week training. Vacancies which offer between 24 and 29 hours per week attract a subsidy of UK£ 40 (56 ECU) per week. Young people on this option are employees of the participating organisation and subject to their normal employment conditions. Training equivalent to one day per week has to be provided either by the employer or by another agency and attracts a once off payment of UK£ 750 (1050 ECU) to the employer. It is intended that these should be new jobs. The **voluntary sector option** is in fact a variant of the employment option.

3.3.43
The full-time **education and training** option offers up to 52 weeks of full-time education and training supported by benefits. It is intended mainly for those who do not have a qualification at NVQ level 2 or above and especially those who lack the qualities, attitudes and basic skills for employment. However, there is an element of flexibility to allow participants to work towards higher qualifications clearly linked to job opportunities. Participants are identified during the Gateway phase. If they have clear training objectives, they are referred to an appropriate provider. Others are given advice and opportunities to visit a number of different providers. Assessment of the suitability of the chosen course takes account of local job opportunities. The period of full-time education and training is intended to lead to an approved qualification.

3.3.44
The **environmental task force** option is intended to improve the employability of young people through work placements and training over a period of up to six months. Environmental task force work must contribute to the improvement of the local, regional or global environment. Projects include contributing to energy and water conservation, protecting the environment, forest and park management and the reclamation of derelict or waste land. This option must offer a minimum of 30 hours per week, including the equivalent of one day per week of training and jobsearch, and should equip participants with skills and work habits, including transferable skills, personal effectiveness, team working and time management. The option includes induction, a personal development plan and support from a New Deal adviser. Participants receive either a wage or JSA plus a once off grant totalling UK£ 400 (560 ECU). Providers receive payment for providing supervision and training and for the participant's outcomes.

3.3.45
An additional **self employment** option was being developed during 1998. It is intended to provide opportunities for at least 20 000 young people to move into self employment. One of the aims is to reduce the administrative and financial restrictions which have made it difficult for young people to take up such opportunities in the past. The option will be based on a business plan put forward by the young person. Those accepted will be given specific training and advice in such topics as Bookkeeping and Marketing and will be shown how to apply for loans and grants. The Employment Service may contract out the provision of specialist training and advice to providers, e.g. organisations such as the Prince's Youth Business Trust. Young people taking this option will receive a weekly allowance equivalent to benefits plus a one off grant of up to UK£ 400 (560 ECU). Providers receive payment for providing supervision and training and for the participants' outcomes.

3.3.46
Young people who refuse or fail to take up a place in one of these options are required to take up a place identified for them by the Employment Service. If young people refuse or fail to take up places, there is no option of continued full benefit; benefit sanctions are applied. In the first 9 months of The New Deal, sanctions had been applied to just over 1350 young people. Subject to independent adjudication, these young people have JSA withdrawn for two weeks unless they can give good reasons for their refusal.

3.3.47
By the end of June 1998 the number of New Deal starts was almost 100 000, including over 10 000 disabled young people. By the end of July 1998 over 19 000 New Deal trainees had been successful in finding work: 13 700 in unsubsidised jobs and nearly 5500 in subsidised jobs. At the same time over 3600 had started training on the full-time Further Education and Training option, nearly 1100 had started work in the voluntary sector and nearly 100 were working in the environment task force. Also by the end of July 1998, over 22 000 employers had signed up for the New Deal.

Northern Ireland

3.3.48

In Northern Ireland, the Jobskills programme caters for young people who are in the 16-18 year old age group who are first-time entrants to the labour market or unemployed. No qualifying period of unemployment is necessary. The highest priority in Jobskills is given to 16 and 17 year old school leavers for whom the government guarantees a training place; this guarantee is also given to those with disabilities up to the age of 22. Jobskills training is delivered by Registered Training Organisations (RTOs), under contract to the T&EA.

3.3.49

Before entering Jobskills all trainees receive guidance and advice from a Careers Officer based in their local Training & Employment Agency JobCentre. Careers Officers then issue a Training Credit which is a guarantee that the T&EA will pay for the training. Trainees are free to take their Training Credit to the Training Organisation (TO) which they decide is the most suitable for them. T&EA JobCentres have details of TOs operating in each area and the type of training they can provide.

3.3.50

Jobskills is now similar to the National Traineeship programme in England (which it predates, having been introduced in 1995). By summer 1998 Jobskills trainees were achieving a 54% success rate at NVQ level 2, double that of the previous Youth Training Programme.

3.3.51

Northern Ireland has also adopted Modern Apprenticeships, and training beyond NVQ level 2 is now virtually only by employed status Modern Apprenticeships.

3.4 Continuing vocational education and training

Background

3.4.1
At the end of February 1998, the government launched *The Learning Age: a renaissance for a new Britain*, a green (consultative) paper which is central to the government's policies in many fields. The following quotation from the foreword by David Blunkett, Secretary of State for Education and Employment, introduces the vision:

To achieve stable and sustainable growth, we will need a well-educated, well-equipped and adaptable labour force. To cope with rapid change and the challenge of the information and communication age, we must ensure that people can return to learning throughout their lives. We cannot rely on a small elite, no matter how highly educated or highly paid. Instead, we need the creativity, enterprise and scholarship of all our people.

As well as securing our economic future, learning has a wider contribution. It helps make ours a civilised society, develops the spiritual side of our lives and promotes active citizenship. Learning enables people to play a full part in their community. It strengthens the family, the neighbourhood and consequently the nation. It helps us fulfil our potential and opens doors to a love of music, art and literature. That is why we value learning for its own sake as well as for the equality of opportunity it brings.

To realise our ambition, we must all develop and sustain a regard for learning at whatever age. For many people this will mean overcoming past experiences which have put them off learning. For others it will mean taking the opportunity, perhaps for the first time, to recognise their own talent, to discover new ways of learning and to see new opportunities opening up. What was previously available only to the few can, in the century ahead, be something which is enjoyed and taken advantage of by the many.

3.4.2
This vision needs to be seen in the context of existing provision, and the way it has been developed, as the government's intention, expressed through the University for Industry (UfI), is to build on and network existing provision rather than replace it. This section, therefore, outlines the background of continuing vocational education and training (CVT), and then describes various activities which contribute to provision, although so far without any structure or coherence.

3.4.3
In the UK there is no legal right to educational leave for continuing education, but there is a long tradition of adults learning. There are, in fact, two separate traditions: non-vocational general education for adults, and job-related continuing vocational education.

3.4.4
In the post-war years, the non-vocational adult education movement acted as a powerful pressure group for government provision. Its influence contributed to the

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founding of the Open University, and the success of that institution strengthened the non-vocational movement. Courses covering a multitude of interests at various levels are offered at subsidised rates, with take-up estimated at three million a year. However, as will be seen in paragraphs 3.4.32 and 3.4.33, the less publicised vocational strand is actually the dominant one.

3.4.5
The vocational tradition, which led adults to study in their own time for professional and vocational qualifications and in the same institutions as young people fresh from school, suffered a set-back between the late 1950s and the mid-1970s as the provision for job-related evening classes dwindled. This was partly because vocational education for entrants to industry became focused on day release, and partly because of changes in conditions of service for college staff.

3.4.6
However the structural changes in courses, particularly the modularisation of vocational education courses at technician and similar levels from the mid-1970s, made it easier to relate continuing education for adults to vocational qualifications. All NVQs and SVQs are available on a modular basis, and the higher levels are notionally of similar status to membership of professional institutions (except where this has become entirely graduate level).

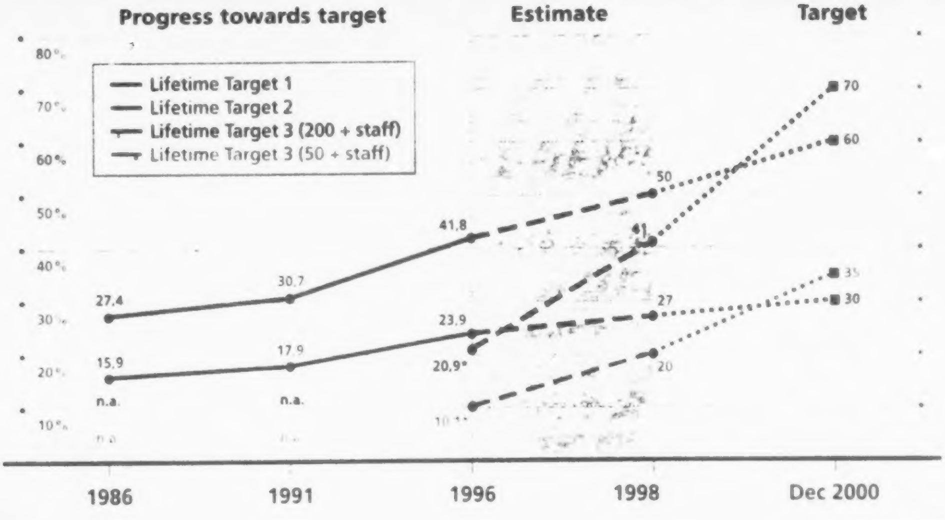
3.4.7
In 1982 the then Department of Education and Science (DES) launched the PICKUP (Professional, Industrial and Commercial Updating) programme to provide training for those in employment. The main aim of this programme, managed by the DES in England and Wales and by Scottish Enterprise in Scotland, was to encourage public sector institutions, whether universities, polytechnics or colleges, to offer short updating courses for adults in employment. The programme generated a very large number of updating courses, culminating in an estimated 940 000 recorded enrolments to PICKUP training during 1989. However the PICKUP programme was subsumed within normal FEFC funding and no longer exists as such. Its legacy is a continuing interest in colleges providing short updating or retraining courses.

Targets

3.4.8
The Lifetime Targets (see paragraphs 3.2.5 and 3.2.6) are as follows:

- Lifetime target 1: 60% of the workforce to be qualified to NVQ/SVQ Level 3, Advanced GNVQ/GSVQ or two or more GCE A Levels/Scottish equivalents.
- Lifetime target 2: 30% of the workforce to have a vocational, professional, management or academic qualification at NVQ/SVQ Level 4 or above
- Lifetime target 3: 70% of all organisations employing 200 or more employees, and 35% of those employing 50 or more (and, in Scotland, 15% of those employing fewer than 50) to be recognised as Investors in People (see paragraph 4.1.18).

Figure 25. **Progress towards the Lifetime Targets**



* March 1997

SOURCE NACETT

Overview

3.4.9

The responsibilities for converting these aspirations into action are diffused and there is no central record of developments. However it is possible to trace a number of activities which between them demonstrate what is happening in practice. These activities can be grouped in a number of identifiable, and sometimes overlapping, ways:

- retraining for the employed (paragraphs 3.4.10 to 3.4.12)
- training for the unemployed (paragraphs 3.4.13 to 3.4.19)
- small business start up training (paragraphs 3.4.20 to 3.4.25)
- Continuous Professional Development (paragraph 3.4.26)
- commitment of individuals to learn (paragraphs 3.4.27 to 3.4.33)
- Adult education (paragraphs 3.4.34 to 3.4.37)
- Open and Flexible Learning (paragraphs 3.4.38 to 3.4.53)
- Availability of learning in public libraries (paragraphs 3.4.54 to 3.4.57)
- Information Technology (paragraphs 3.4.58 and 3.4.59).

The employed

3.4.10

Employer sponsored training (the responsibility of employers rather than the state) has held up well over the past decade. The figures on the next page show trends in the number and proportion of existing employees (as opposed to new entry) receiving formal job related training in the four weeks previous to the survey (the figures from 1995 onwards are not strictly comparable with previous ones), and provide further details for 1997.

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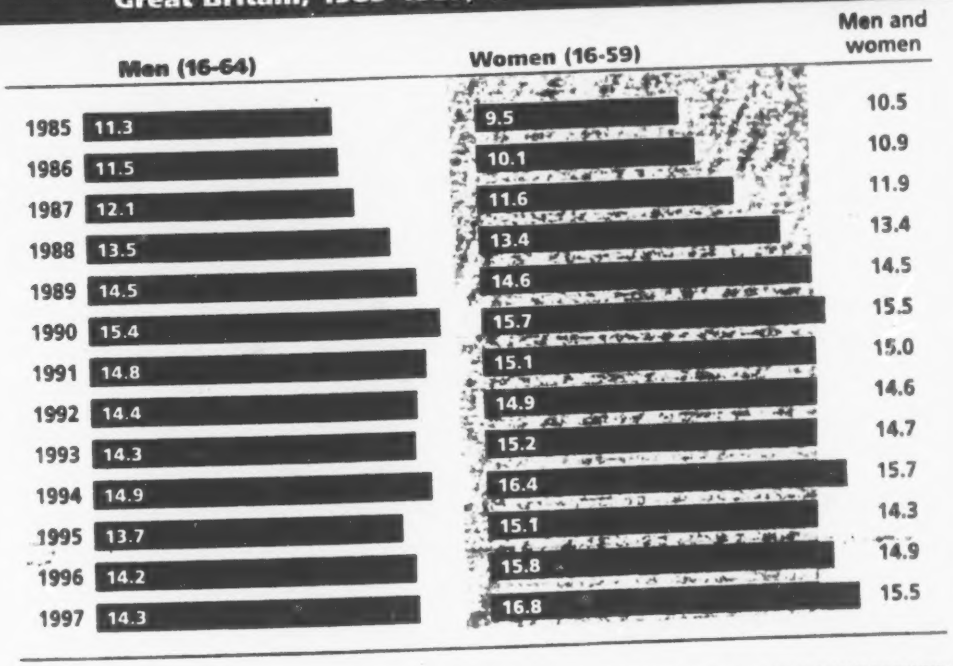
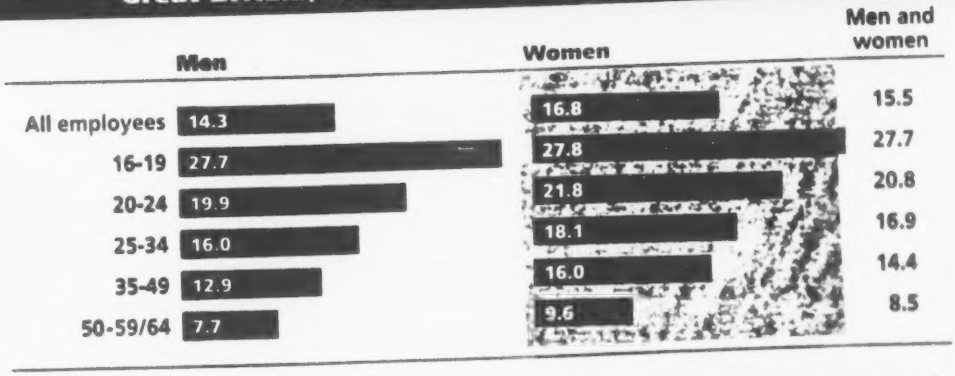
Figure 26. **Proportion of employees in employer sponsored training, Great Britain, 1985-1997, %**



SOURCE LABOUR FORCE SURVEY, 1985-1996, SPRING OF EACH YEAR (NOT SEASONALLY ADJUSTED)

Figure 27. **Proportion of employees receiving employer sponsored training in the last four weeks by age and sex, spring 1997, Great Britain, in %**



SOURCE LABOUR MARKET TRENDS, APRIL 1998

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Table 13. **Proportion of employees receiving employer sponsored training in the last four weeks, by age and method of training, 1977, United Kingdom, in %**

	Receiving off-the-job training only	Receiving on-the-job training only	Receiving both on- and off-the-job training	Total receiving any training
All ages	8.6	4.2	2.5	15.4
16-19	16.6	5.9	5.1	27.8
20-24	10.9	5.9	3.7	20.6
25-29	10.0	4.4	3.1	17.5
30-39	8.9	4.2	2.7	15.7
40-49	7.9	3.9	2.1	13.9
50-59	4.8	3.2	1.2	9.2
60-64	-	-	-	2.8

SOURCE *EDUCATION AND TRAINING STATISTICS FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM 1997*

3.4.11

Figures quoted in *The Learning Age* (see paragraph 3.4.1 above) indicate that:

- 82% of employers with 25 plus employees provided some off-the-job training over the previous 12 months
- employers provided this training for less than 50% of their workforce
- younger employees were more likely than older employees to receive job-related training
- employees in professional occupations were more likely than others to receive training
- employees with good educational qualifications were more likely than those with no qualifications to receive job-related training
- training was less likely in smaller firms than larger firms
- formal training was much less likely in firms with less than 25 employees.

3.4.12

The supply side is difficult to quantify. As a legacy of the PICKUP programme (see paragraph 3.4.7) many colleges, universities and other institutions of higher education offer short (full cost recovery) courses of retraining. There are also a large number of private providers, mostly offering short courses in the business, finance, information technology and personal skills areas.

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Training for the unemployed

3.4.13
In April 1993 the DfEE's Training for Work (TfW) programme superseded the previous programmes Employment Training and Employment Action. Those who have been unemployed for six months are offered interviews and helped to find either work or a training place. Anyone aged 18-59 who has been unemployed for six months is eligible for TfW; priority is given to those out of work for 6-12 months or for more than two years, or with disabilities. Certain other groups are also eligible regardless of their length of unemployment (e.g. those with literacy and numeracy needs) and some do not have to be defined as unemployed (e.g. returners to the labour market). From April 1998 TfW has been redesignated as Work-based Training for Adults (WBTA), but here the old term is used for convenience.

3.4.14
Those who enter TfW are given a training allowance, equal to their weekly unemployment benefit entitlement plus UK£ 10 (14 ECU) per week, and it is possible for TECs to provide help with travel, lodging, child care and other costs associated with training. Each person who joins TfW is given an individual Training Plan by the training provider. If the training provider offers employment during the course the training can still be continued.

3.4.15
It is estimated that there were about 39 300 trainees on TfW in England and Wales in May 1998 compared with 65 500 in May 1996, and 145 200 at the peak in 1992/93. This decline is partly due to a reduction in the length of training. The number of starts in England and Wales in the year to May 1998 was 179 100, a fall of 22% on the previous 12 months. In the period November 1996 to October 1997 72% of all leavers completed the training agreed with their training providers compared with 70% in the previous 12 months and 48% in 1990/91.

3.4.16
TfW has not been entirely successful:

- The proportion of leavers in a job increased steadily from 31% in 1991/92 to 45% in 1996/97, but is still low.
- Although the primary aim of TfW is to get people into jobs, working towards recognised qualifications is an important feature of the programme, but in the 12 months to May 1997 only 44% had gained a full or part qualification and 38% had gained a full qualification.

3.4.17
The low success rate of TfW, and its predecessor programmes, in placing people in jobs and helping then obtain qualifications has attracted criticism. However, the basic problem which Employment Training and now TfW were designed to tackle is a very difficult one. Many unemployed people have failed to find work because they are not adequately qualified for the level of jobs which are available. At the same time, the long-term unemployed include not only those who genuinely want to find new employment, but also many who have severe personal difficulties and special training needs (perhaps exacerbated by unemployment) which make the task of retraining them even harder.

3.4.18

The New Deal (see paragraphs 3.3.39 to 3.3.47) was being extended during 1998 to the unemployed over 25s, with a variety of experimental measures, including:

- extension of the New Deal to lone parents and disabled people from spring 1998 onwards
- a UK£ 75 (105 ECU) per week subsidy for employers who recruit people out of work for two years or more (from June 1998 onwards)
- the opportunity for up to 10 000 unemployed adults to take up full time training and study (also from June 1998) in a series of pilot projects using the New Deal approach with older unemployed beginning with 25-35 year olds in selected areas
- the 'Employment Zone' programme which will provide personal job accounts for the older unemployed 'many of whom will be over 50'.

3.4.19

In Northern Ireland an EU funded pilot programme 'Bridge to Employment' is being extended as part of an initiative launched by the Chancellor of the Exchequer during a visit to Northern Ireland in May 1998; 'Bridge' offers short, tailored pre-employment training to long-term unemployed people to allow them to compete on more equal terms for vacancies in inward investment or expanding businesses.

Small business start up training

3.4.20

One of the government's policies has been to encourage enterprise, including both self-employment and the creation of small businesses, where the UK has tended to lag behind other EU members. The share of SMEs in total employment in the UK in 1994 was 59.8% compared with an EU average of 65.9%. The table in paragraph 1.3.14 gives the breakdown for 1993.

3.4.21

The government programmes for helping enterprise are now run by the TECs and LECs. The specific schemes which previously existed (Small Firms Service, Local Enterprise Agencies, and the Enterprise Allowance Scheme, which paid people in the first year of setting up their own business) have been replaced by Business Start Up training which may vary from TEC to TEC. This is not unreasonable given the very wide variations in the size of business in the different TEC and LEC areas, and in the type of business which is attracted to them.

3.4.22

In Scotland, LECs have a much wider range of programmes and facilities for helping enterprise than TECs because they also have responsibility for a wide range of schemes and initiatives previously run by the Scottish Development Agency and the Highlands and Islands Development Board.

3.4.23
The small business sector is likely to continue to grow, partly because of changes in industry (increased sub-contracting by larger firms, growth in services, and technological developments), and partly because over the last decade self-employment or starting one's own business has become almost as natural an option as finding employment in a larger organisation. The provision for adults to learn the elements of business has increased very greatly in the last few years, partly through PICKUP-style courses in colleges, and partly through courses run by Employment Department-funded consultants, now the responsibility of TECs and LECs. However, the number following the latter courses has fallen off as the financial incentives have become less attractive.

3.4.24
The table below shows the number of people in Great Britain who started on Business Start Up schemes from their inception in 1991/92 to 1994/95. Statistics for subsequent years have not been published, presumably because the statistics of schemes (delivered through TECs) are seldom available.

Table 14. **Participation in Business Start Up, 1991 to 1995**

1991/92	50 000
1992/93	41 000
1993/94	40 800
1994/95	29 800

SOURCE **TRAINING STATISTICS 1996**

3.4.25
Northern Ireland's small business agency, the Local Enterprise Development Unit offers business start-up training and management skills training for small businesses with under 50 employees.

Continuous professional development

3.4.26
As technology impinges more and more on all professions, it is becoming common for all new entrants to a particular profession to be required to undertake continuous professional development (CPD) if they are to maintain their professional body membership and hence their status. The Engineering Council (an umbrella organisation of over 20 professional bodies in the engineering field) and other professional institutions have been experimenting for some years with flexible arrangements which enable professional people to update themselves, either through special courses or through less formal methods, including open learning. CPD is becoming a feature of most, if not all, professional bodies with a graduate level for membership. However, the rigour of requirements varies considerably between professional bodies.

Commitment of individuals to learn

3.4.27

For several years DfEE has been seeking ways of encouraging individuals (not necessarily the employed or the unemployed) to learn.

3.4.28

The government has contributed to the 5-year *Campaign for Learning* which was launched by the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) in April 1996. The Campaign brings together a national alliance of companies, the National Institute for Adult Continuing Education (NIACE), the TEC National Council, the Open University and many others. The aims of the campaign are to:

- increase awareness of the importance of personal learning, raise expectations and change attitudes towards learning;
- to get more individuals taking part in learning;
- to get more companies and other organisations actively working towards the principles of a learning organisation.

3.4.29

There are a number of other developments in providing continuing education and training for adults. A recent and important growth area has been in the provision of courses for women returners to the labour market. This has been particularly important in two fields:

- Women with high educational qualifications and managerial skills who might often find that without a special retraining they would have to take jobs below their capability on re-entry to the labour market after raising a family.
- Office workers, because in their absence from working life most offices have been invaded by information technology which initially may appear to be mysterious, and even frightening.

3.4.30

Although it cannot be said that every woman returner is now fully prepared by training in advance, the opportunities for such training have increased very considerably since the mid-1980s.

3.4.31

The *National Adult Learning Survey*, undertaken in 1997, was the most comprehensive national survey of adult learning ever undertaken in the UK. It involved interviews with a random sample of over 5500 adults in England and Wales (about 5200 when those in full-time continuous education are excluded). Respondents were classified as:

- Non-learners: those respondents who indicated they had not done any learning in the past three years.

- Learners: those respondents who had left full time education and who indicated they had done some learning related to their current or future job during the past three years or since leaving full-time continuous education; their learning could have been either in formal taught learning, or it could have been informal on-the-job learning, or other non-taught learning.

3.4.32
Learners were classified as to whether they were vocational learners (who had done some learning related to their current or future job) or non-vocational learners. The following tables show the percentage in each category of the sample (excluding those in full-time education) who were non-learners or who were vocational learners or non-vocational learners. Some were both.

Table 15. **Gender of vocational and non-vocational learners and non-learners**

Gender	% of sample who were: vocational learners	non-vocational learners	non-learners
Male	72	27	22
Female	61	32	30

Table 16. **Age of vocational and non-vocational learners and non-learners**

Age group	% of sample who were: vocational learners	non-vocational learners	non-learners
16-19	76	29	18
20-29	82	32	15
30-39	78	29	18
40-49	73	29	22
50-59	60	30	33
60-69	28	29	53

Table 17. Work status of vocational and non-vocational learners and non-learners

Work status	% of sample who were:		
	vocational learners	non-vocational learners	non-learners
Paid work	82	30	15
Unemployed	66	25	28
Looking after home and family	31	29	53
Retired	20	33	57
Long term sickness	23	28	59

Table 18. Occupations of vocational and non-vocational learners and non learners

Occupation	% of sample who were:		
	vocational learners	non-vocational learners	non-learners
Professional/managerial	85	34	10
Other non-manual	80	36	14
Skilled manual	65	24	30
Semi-skilled manual	64	23	31
Unskilled manual	44	19	50

Table 19. Age at which learners and non-learners completed education

Age	% of sample who were:		
	vocational learners	non-vocational learners	non-learners
Up to 16	56	25	36
17-18	78	34	16
19-20	79	36	14
21 or more	88	40	7

SOURCE (TABLES 15 TO 19) ***NATIONAL ADULT LEARNING SURVEY: 1997***

3.4.33
The survey confirms what has generally been thought probable (see paragraph 3.4.11), ie that people are more likely to be learners if they are younger, in paid work, in non-manual occupations, finished their education later. However the emphasis on vocational learning which clearly comes through reinforces those who have advocated job-related continuing vocational education (see paragraphs 3.4.4 and 3.4.5).

Adult education

3.4.34
In 1995/96 there were nearly 1.2 million enrolments in England and Wales in courses at adult education centres. These included nearly a quarter of a million enrolments on basic literacy or numeracy courses.

3.4.35
In Scotland it has been possible for a long time for adults to join senior classes in secondary schools, e.g. for language learning, and they are doing so in increasing numbers. This is now also possible in England and Wales where such an approach was previously banned by educational legislation.

3.4.36
Access courses, which prepare adults with insufficient formal qualifications to enter degree courses at some universities have been developed in many centres throughout Great Britain since the 1980s, both by open learning and by more traditional means. These courses are now supported by the Further Education Funding Councils.

3.4.37
The Scottish Wider Access Programme (SWAP) has brought together all local authority further education colleges and all higher education institutions in Scotland into three consortia. Access courses offered by further education colleges provide guaranteed entry to a higher education course. Access courses, normally comprising SCOTVEC National Certificate modules, are usually of one year duration and are taken on a full-time basis. However, the flexibility inherent in the modular structure of the courses enables part-time provision and distance-learning also.

Open and flexible learning

3.4.38
In 1981 the Manpower Services Commission published a consultative document *An Open Tech Programme* and established a task group to set up an open learning system. This Open Tech programme came to be based, not on a single institution like the Open University, but on developing open and flexible learning delivered within enterprises or by local centres. These centres were sometimes within existing colleges or sometimes specially established. The government pump-primed the Open Tech Programme until 1987, and the DfEE still maintains a role in providing funding for the University for Industry and other aspects of open learning.

3.4.39
The Open Tech programme concentrated on projects for

- design and production of learning materials
- development of delivery centres
- information on the availability of learning materials and delivery centres.

3.4.40
At the time of the Open Tech programme, computing had not developed sufficiently for a major introduction of computer-based learning; most of the materials developed within the programme were in print form. Once the programme was completed some of the producers of materials continued to produce them for sale. Commercial publishers also started to produce self-study materials. Software and specialist companies began to design computer-based learning materials, originally on floppy disc and more recently on CD-ROM.

3.4.41
The Open Tech programme did not provide for a permanent coordinating body for open learning. The policy was to embed open learning into the VET infrastructure, which included

- Industrial Training Boards for industrial sectors
- local authorities
- colleges in the FE sector
- the Manpower Services Commission (MSC)
- the qualification system.

3.4.42
This policy of embedding appeared to be working until, between 1988 and 1992, the government changed the VET infrastructure by

- replacing statutory industrial training boards with Non-Statutory Industrial Training Organisations (paragraph 3.2.9)
- making colleges independent incorporated bodies (paragraph 3.2.22) with the Further Education Funding Councils for England and Wales being responsible for their funding and quality (paragraph 3.2.23)
- transforming the MSC into a directorate of the Employment Department (paragraph 3.1.22)
- creating TECs and LECs (paragraph 3.2.16)
- introducing the NVQ qualification framework (paragraph 5.1.4).

3.4.43
The overall effect of these changes was to damage the embedding process, because

- ITOs tended to be very small organisations, seldom able to support open learning
- once Local Education Authorities were no longer responsible for colleges, most (not all) tended to close any general support systems for open learning in their areas

- the development of open learning in colleges was less than was predicted in 1987
- TECs mostly showed little interest in open learning, to the extent that a DfEE initiative was launched in 1996 with the objectives of
    - helping TECs examine the business case for the use and promotion of flexible training methods and develop appropriate strategies
    - providing support for TECs in implementing and advising on the use of flexible training methods
- NVQs were based on observable performance in the workplace, which is often difficult to prepare for by open learning.

3.4.44
Although the funding regime of the Further Education Funding Council for England (FEFC) has treated study by open or distance learning quite favourably, the numbers studying by this mode are small in aggregate and only amount to 2.9% of all students in the further education system. The table below shows the numbers for 1995/96 in thousands by gender and age group.

Table 20. **Open learning students (000s) funded by FEFC, 1995/96**

Age group	M	F	Total
Under 16	0.1	0.2	0.3
16-18	1.7	2.2	3.9
19-20	1.6	2.1	3.7
21-24	4.2	5.7	9.9
25-59	27.3	39.0	66.2
60 and over	1.0	1.0	2.0
Age unknown	1.0	1.1	2.1
Total	**37.0**	**51.2**	**88.2**

SOURCE **FEFC 1997**

3.4.45
There is no single system for the production and dissemination of open learning material in the UK. The largest collection of material, both in print and on computers (about 7000 titles), is available for inspection at BOLDU Ltd in Birmingham.

3.4.46
Under the Open Tech programme a number of open learning centres were opened, some as part of colleges, some in large companies, some as separate centres. As it was seen that the application of principles of open learning improved traditional teaching there was a strong movement to integrate open learning into the 'mainstream' of colleges. In many cases this led to the disappearance of separately identified open learning centres, especially as the colleges came under very great financial pressure.

3.4.47

Many industrial companies established open learning centres for their employees, and then redeveloped them into centres for computer based training. More recently, however, some large companies are starting to sub-contract the provision of these resources to colleges or private training centres; others are redesigning them as IT training centres.

3.4.48

Open learning seems to have been more successfully embedded in the training culture of larger companies. Figures for 1993 show the use of open learning as a training method by a percentage of all employers in each sample.

Table 21. **Proportion of firms using open learning by size, 1993**

Size of firm (Number of employees)	% of firms using open learning
10-24	20
25-49	37
50-99	33
100-199	44
200-499	57
500+	88
All firms (10 or more employees)	28

SOURCE: *TRAINING STATISTICS 1996*

Table 22. **Proportion of firms using open learning by sector, 1993**

Sector *	% of firms using open learning
Production	18
Construction	11
Distribution	19
Communication	18
Office-based	47
Government	54
Other sectors	25
All firms *	28

* Firms with 10 or more employees

SOURCE: *TRAINING STATISTICS 1996*

3.4.49
The development of multimedia technology has started to create again great interest in the development of special centres, where students can use more advanced computers than they would otherwise be able to use. Some of the centres are being opened in colleges and some by private enterprise.

3.4.50
In 1987 the government established the Open College *to provide and encourage wide access to vocational education and training* particularly through broadcasting and open learning methods. The Open College was initially different from the Open Tech Programme in that it was a single organisation rather than a network of institutions and organisations. It was intended to become the flagship of the open learning movement providing vocational education and training. Unlike the Open Tech movement, but like the Open University, it had a high broadcasting element. The original aim was to achieve self-sustainment through selling a broad range of open learning materials in vocational areas. However, it soon became clear that the sale of packages alone would not generate the income required, and the Open College then offered a broad range of services within the area of open and flexible learning, including large-scale customised training programmes for the corporate sector. It has now been taken over by the Pearson Group of publishers.

3.4.51
In 1991 a number of polytechnics and institutions of higher education banded together to found the 'Open Polytechnic'. The reasoning was that the demand for higher education was increasing so rapidly that there was a market for obtaining higher education qualifications by open learning. When polytechnics became universities, the title was changed to the Open Learning Foundation (OLF). OLF concentrates on developing new teaching and learning materials (e.g. for caring occupations) and on promoting staff development to enable these materials to be delivered effectively. It aims to help the integration of open learning into established activities, and to strike a suitable balance between open learning and more traditional methods in its member institutions.

3.4.52
The Open University's primary purpose is to provide opportunities for undergraduate study to adults at a distance. The University's undergraduate programme is supported by grants from the Higher Education Funding Council. Through its continuing education programme, which is run on a self-financing basis, the University also offers courses for adults in a wide range of disciplines. These include the University's MBA course, other commercial and technical courses, and courses in social skills, such as parenting.

3.4.53
In Northern Ireland the T&EA's Open Learning Programme encourages the use of open and flexible learning as a cost-effective solution to particular training needs. It also supports certain categories of people - unemployed (with, currently, no qualifying period), women returners and disabled - to undertake vocationally relevant training in a network of Open Learning Access Centres. These Centres, most in Belfast, founded through city regeneration funding, cater for those for whom conventional training is impracticable or unsuitable. This programme has recently been evaluated and T&EA is currently considering its future.

Public libraries

3.4.54

There are 5000 public libraries in the UK, run by 126 Library Authorities. Some 34 million people (58% of the population) have library membership and make 400 million library visits each year (10 times the number who attend league football matches). Public libraries have long been used as a basis for informal learning, but in recent years the government has recognised this, eg in 1989 it started an initiative to persuade public libraries to have Open Learning sections, and publishers of materials to accept that this activity would enhance rather than cut into their markets.

3.4.55

A growing number of libraries provide a loan service for CD-ROMs, particularly those with a list price of less than UK£ 50 (70 ECU) and often making a charge (books are lent free). Even more libraries allow access to CD-ROMs on computers in their reference library section or, in some cases, in their Open Learning section (over 80% of Library Authorities now maintain an Open Learning service in at least one of their libraries: 210 in all). Of Library Authorities surveyed in 1996/97, 95% provided a computer, 83% a video, 78% audio equipment, 32% CD-ROM, 7% access to the Internet.

3.4.56

In general libraries have reacted to the problems caused by loaning CD-ROMs in a similar fashion to the way in the past in which they solved loans of audio cassettes, videos and music CDs. Some libraries are extremely well equipped with computers; the main public library in Sunderland, for example, is a pilot UfI learning centre; others are Technologies for Training Information Points.

3.4.57

The government has recognised public libraries' central role in ensuring that all members of society have access to ICT and can enjoy the benefits it brings. It has therefore set the objective that every public library should be connected to the National Grid for Learning by 2002. To encourage this, the government is:

- providing UK£ 50 million (70 MECU) from the National Lottery New Opportunities Fund for the digitisation of educational and cultural materials held preliminary by public libraries;

- providing UK£ 20 million (28 MECU) from the Lottery so every public librarian in the UK can be trained in ICT use;

- providing a UK£ 6 million (8.4 MECU) challenge fund in conjunction with the Wolfson Foundation in 1998-2000, creating ICT projects in public libraries in England.

Information technology

3.4.58
There is a great deal of interest in the UK in harnessing IT for business, education and training. Initiatives include not only the National Grid for Learning (see paragraphs 3.2.40 to 3.2.43) but also:

- The **Information Society Initiative**, which has established a series of support centres (60 operational in spring 1998 with a target of a further 20 by the end of the year), funded by the Department of Trade and Industry. The aim is to encourage small businesses to use IT.
- DfEE's **Flexible Training Strategies** programme which has the aim to ensure that flexible training methods make a significant contribution to the development of skills and progression towards National Training Targets through helping TECs develop strategies to exploit such methods.
- DfEE's **Technologies for Training** initiative (see below)
- **QUILT**, a joint programme between the Further Education Development Agency and the National Council for Educational Technology, with funding from the Further Education Funding Council, to make all teachers in the FE sector computer literate.
- **Centres of Excellence for ICT**: It was announced as part of the budget for 1998/99 that 40 regional Centres of Excellence for Information and Communications Technology will be established. The aim is to establish these by the end of 1998. Centres *'will provide innovative and flexible training, tailored to the information and communications technology skill needs... a key task will be to respond to skill shortages in the IT industry as we approach the millennium'*. The centres are likely to be created by public sector bodies, such as TECs and colleges, working together in consortia.
- **IT for All**: A four-year government initiative which promotes awareness of, and access to, information and communication technologies amongst the general public, IT for All aims to help everybody to become more comfortable with IT in their daily lives. However, the initiative is particularly targeted at the 40% of UK adults who (according to research) are concerned that technology is leaving them behind or who are unconvinced of the benefits it offers. In early 1998 there were 2000 access sites where members of the public can try out new technologies; the aim was to double these to 4000 by the end of 1998.

3.4.59
Technologies for Training (TfT) is a national information and advisory service established in August 1996 by the Department for Education and Employment. The aim of TfT is *'to ensure that technology makes an effective contribution to the development of a skilled and internationally competitive workforce in the UK and to assist progress towards national training targets'*. TfT is achieving this aim by ensuring that information and independent advice is readily available on all aspects of the use of technologies in training, especially in relation to accessibility, the design and production of materials, delivery and cost effectiveness. In this context

'training' is taken to include vocational education. Another way of stating TfT's role is that it will provide services which help improve the operations of the market for technologies related to training, both

- on the demand side, by providing authoritative, unbiased and up-to-date advice and information on the potential and availability of technology based products
- on the supply side, by improving the flow of information to publishers and producers of learning and assessment material.

University for Industry

3.4.60
The University for Industry (UfI) is central to the government's policies for lifelong learning. The government predicts that within five years of launch 2.5 million people and businesses a year will be using UfI Information services, with over 600 000 a year following UfI-brokered programmes of learning. The most authoritative statement about the UfI is to be found in the Pathfinder Prospectus published on 31 March 1998:

The UfI will be an organisation for open and distance learning. It will have both private individuals and businesses as customers. Using modern technologies, it will broker high quality learning products and services and make them available at home, in the workplace and at learning centres country-wide. It will break down barriers to learning by making provision more flexible and accessible, by stimulating new markets to bring down costs, by offering clear reliable information and advice, and by providing opportunities for people to learn at their own pace and in convenient locations.

3.4.61
The UfI will have six key activities:

1. analyse the needs of the market and potential customers;
2. drive demand for learning through mass marketing and promotion;
3. provide people with information, advice and guidance;
4. ensure the availability of, and connect customers to, high quality learning programmes;
5. commission new content to bridge gaps between supply and demand;
6. ensure the quality of products and services accessed through it.

3.4.62
Initially the UfI will focus on the following priority areas:

- basic skills
- information and communications technologies for the workplace

- small and medium-sized businesses
- specific industrial and service sectors: automotive components; multimedia; environmental technology and services; and distributive and retail trades.

3.4.63
The infrastructure of the UfI will include:

- a national network of learning centres (initially about 1000): *Centres will be conveniently located and open at convenient times. Many will be based on existing facilities in workplaces, colleges, universities, schools and libraries. Others, with the UfI's encouragement, might be established in new locations ranging from housing estates and shopping centres to football clubs and leisure centres. The aim is to attract more people and businesses, who might otherwise be deterred from learning, by providing them with more convenient ways to improve their skills.*
- customer support systems, which will include:

  - enquiry systems including Learning Direct's telephone helpline (see below)
  - individual membership systems
  - corporate membership systems
  - guidance systems.

3.4.64
Learning Direct is a UK-wide telephone helpline free of charge to user, which offers advice on how to re-enter the world of learning and on courses to suit individual needs. Learning Direct may refer people to local advice services, adult education, further and higher education, and private providers. It has links with careers guidance at local level, and with the advice offered to individuals by TECs, the Youth Service and the Employment Service. It can also advise employers about qualifications, training or development for their employees.

3.4.65
The UfI will not be an institution. It will be run, by a central team, as a public-private partnership.

The public sector will provide the initial impetus and will assure funding for the early development of the UfI's activities. During its development period, and well before the formal launch of the University for Industry, the UfI will start to channel existing private sector interests into a wide range of co-operative relationships.

Partners will be drawn from many different sectors, and will include suppliers of learning products; large companies willing to offer support by opening up their training programmes to wider participation; colleges, other public sector organisations, and new private sector entrants interested in providing learning centres; media groups offering different platforms for the delivery of courses endorsed by the UfI; as well as trade associations, trade unions, and employers'

federations.
As the market for lifelong learning expands and the Ufl's financial performance is demonstrated, private sector financial institutions will be increasingly attracted to fund the Ufl's growing capital requirements by investing directly in its activities - like commissioning new products which may require substantial resources.

3.4.66

The organisational structure of the Ufl is likely to evolve through three stages: early transition, roll-out (with a launch in 2000) and 'steady state operation'. The University of Industry became a company limited by guarantee with the name Ufi Ltd, and from late November 1999 its learning centres and information service have been promoted under the brand name *learndirect*. The ideas for the funding of Ufl are described in Chapter 4.

Adult guidance

3.4.67

Many careers services have expanded their role into working with adults, but there is no national pattern.

Northern Ireland

3.4.68

The Business Support Division of T&EA offers a range of programmes for:

- staff development at all levels
- development of existing managers
- development of future managers
- company development programme for small businesses (supported by the European Structural Fund).

Chapter 4
Regulatory and financial framework

4.1 Administrative and regulatory arrangements

Introduction

4.1.1

The legal basis for VET in the UK differs from some other Member States of the European Union in that the implementation of policies is often not based on primary and secondary legislation. There is a reluctance to use primary legislation (and so indirectly secondary legislation) because, given the parliamentary procedures involved, there tends to be competition for parliamentary time. Instead there has been considerable use of company law (see paragraphs 4.1.8 to 4.1.10) and the law of contract (see paragraphs 4.1.12 and 4.1.13). Many of the functions previously carried out by government departments have now been contracted out to agencies, consortia or private companies, following tendering.

4.1.2

New government policies are normally announced in White Papers, laid before Parliament and published by the Stationery Office (before privatisation Her Majesty's Stationery Office). Possible policies on which the government wishes to consult are similarly published in Green Papers.

4.1.3

The merger in 1995 of the Department for Education and the Employment Department to form the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) has led to a convergence of two separate departmental cultures. The Department for Education was concerned with broad policies and initiatives, leaving detailed implementation to 'intermediate' agencies (see paragraphs 1.1.25 to 1.1.29). The Employment Department, having partly been the successor of the Manpower Services Commission (itself an intermediate agency), was accustomed to running programmes, although the detailed implementation was normally through contracts with other organisations, agencies and private companies. The merged DfEE has so far tended towards the policy making role of the former DFE rather than the programme running role of the Employment Department.

4.1.4

Implementation of the present government's policies for VET may require adjustments to the patterns described above, perhaps with a blurring of the difference between policy oversight and the running of programmes.

4.1.5

The use of Government Offices for the Regions to contract with TECs and Careers Services may foreshadow the devolution of some responsibilities for VET to English RDAs (see paragraph 1.1.12). The White Paper which introduced the creation of RDAs indicated a coordinating rather than an executive role in relation to education and training:

The Government want RDAs to make a powerful contribution to the challenges of education, training and employability. RDAs' economic strategies are central to this, and will include a skills agenda addressing how to improve the education, skills and employability of local people. RDAs will work closely with Further and Higher

Education, TECs, local authorities, and National Training Organisations such as the Engineering and Marine Training Authority to pool information and develop strategies which take account of national, regional and local objectives. We expect the skills agenda in the regional economic strategies to contain particular messages for the key partners to help strengthen partnership arrangements and to coordinate action to improve the local supply of skills.

In addition to developing a strategic approach to meeting skills needs, RDAs will play a wide-ranging role to help improve the performance of their regional economies. RDAs will help the Government to raise standards in education and training and tackle deprivation and social exclusion. In developing and implementing their strategies, it will be essential that RDAs help the Government make a reality of the concept of lifelong learning by promoting initiatives which help individuals and employers to undertake more learning.

We also want RDAs to engage Further Education and Higher Education fully in the regional agenda and improve cooperation between these sectors. They will work closely with the Further Education Funding Council's Regional Committees to ensure that provision takes full account of emerging economic trends. And they will work with Universities to enhance the exploitation of the University knowledge base. RDAs will also have a specific role to work with Government Offices and TECs to monitor and enhance the TEC contribution to regional economic objectives.

Legislation

4.1.6
The legislative tradition is different for the educational system and for the training system. As the state imposed duties on local authorities to provide education and made education compulsory for children up to a given age, it had to use legislation to maintain the necessary control. The Education Reform Act 1988 amended the requirements of the 1944 Act (see paragraph 2.1.5). Although mainly aimed at schools, the 1988 Act was also used to create the new situation in which colleges became more autonomous. The Education Reform (NI) Order 1989 made similar provisions for Northern Ireland.

In Scotland, the Self Governing Schools etc (Scotland) Act 1989 established new College Councils with greater powers delegated by the education authorities. The incorporation of colleges in England and Wales under the funding arrangements of the Further Education Funding Councils, and in Scotland direct funding by the Scottish Office Education Department, required further legislation, which was enacted by parliament in 1992.

The Secretary of States' powers to approve the types of courses offered by colleges and schools and to require institutions to provide statistical information and publish examination results, are also the result of this legislation.

4.1.7
Training was the responsibility of the Employment Department. Until the 1964 Industrial Training Act the tradition was to avoid legislation. The 1964 Act, which still applies to the two surviving ITBs (see paragraph 3.1.13), was needed to empower the Secretary of State to create Industrial Training Boards, which would raise revenue through a levy on industry.

Legal personality

4.1.8

In order to operate effectively, all the bodies in the vocational education and training system have to have legal personalities; otherwise they would not be able to enter into contracts (including contracts of employment with their staff), and would have difficulty in making purchases or sales. Under British law legal personalities can be created in a number of ways, including Royal Charter, as a result of legislation (as in the Further and Higher Education Act, 1992), as trusts, or under company legislation.

4.1.9

Some of the early bodies such as the Royal Society of Arts and City and Guilds (as well as the original Guilds themselves), and the major professional bodies, have Royal Charters. Colleges and Industrial Training Boards have legal personalities as a result of legislation.

4.1.10

In the 1970s and 1980s it was found that the creation of companies limited by guarantee under company legislation, was the most flexible and least onerous method of creating new bodies. Most of the newer awarding bodies and all the TECs and LECs are therefore companies limited by guarantee. They have no share capital and are not able to distribute profits, although they can earn a surplus and maintain financial reserves. In some cases, the government departments concerned maintain a degree of control by appointing the chairman and members of these companies. The right to do so is enshrined in the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the company. Many of these companies limited by guarantee are also educational charities, which gives them an advantageous tax status, but subjects them to the regulation of the Charity Commissioners. The voluntary sector managing agencies are also frequently companies limited by guarantee and may have charitable status. Many of the private sector managing agencies and training organisations are companies limited by share capital, and can make and distribute profits.

Regulation

4.1.11

Given the comparative absence of legislation, the main regulation of the vocational education and training system is by

- the reserve powers of the Department for Education and Employment and the other education departments over educational establishments
- financial controls (i.e. by criteria for, or conditions attached to, funding by the Further Education Funding Councils)
- contract
- inspection
- quality assurance
- charter
- the qualification system.

Regulation by contract

4.1.12
In addition to using company law to create organisations, the law of contract has been used to regulate relationships between organisations. The TECs, for example, are under contract to the Department for Education and Employment through the Government Offices for the Regions. Training providers for Youth Training and Employment Training originally carried out their work under contract to the Employment Department. Contracts for these programmes are now awarded by the TECs and LECs. Ufi Ltd. is now also contracted to DfEE to deliver its services.

4.1.13
This use of company legislation and the law of contract means that the different organisations in the system are able to react to changing requirements as rapidly as private industry would be able to, in contrast to the slower reaction time associated with legislation. It has also made it easier for the government to use tendering as a means of obtaining value for money in its expenditure on training.

Regulation by inspection

4.1.14
The Further Education Funding Council created its own inspectorate with the aim of inspecting each of the colleges in the sector every four years. The inspectorate's terms of reference are:

- to assess standards and trends across the further education sector and advise the Council, its committees and working groups on the performance of the sector overall
- to prepare and publish reports on individual institutions
- to identify and make more widely known good practice and promising developments in further education and draw attention to weaknesses that require attention
- to provide advice and assistance to those with responsibilities for, or in institutions in the sector, through its day-to-day contacts, its contributions to staff training, and its publications
- to keep abreast of international developments in post-school education and training.

4.1.15
In 1996/97 the inspectorate completed its first four year cycle. The intention now is for the inspectorate to move to a more focused inspection programme and for colleges to assume greater responsibility for assessing the quality of their own provision. The aim is to promote a self-critical culture in the sector. At the same time FEFC is:

- requiring its inspectorate and its audit service to work together
- planning accreditation of colleges, with accredited status achievable by all colleges in the sector; accreditation is being introduced in 1998/99.

4.1.16

The government has established a Training Standards Council (TSC), which provides the training inspectorate for all training programmes assisted by government and European Union funding. There are some 2000 training providers, each of which will be inspected every four years, with reports published on TSC's website. Inspection is part of a continuous process of improvement, which is based on annual self-assessment by training providers. Inspectors work with TECs to monitor the accuracy of self-assessments and to ensure that improvements are being made (see also Annex 5).

Regulation by quality assurance

4.1.17

A number of colleges and many training organisations have adopted industrial quality standards such as Total Quality Management and ISO 9000.

4.1.18

In many cases, however, the preferred quality standard is **Investors in People** (IIP). DfEE believes that Investors in People has the potential to be a major factor in ensuring that those in employment receive continuing training. Investors in People is a National Standard which recognises the important link between the development of people and business success. Becoming an Investor in People demands a real commitment from the top of the organisation to consider the training and development needs of all employees in line with business needs. The key components of Investors in People are:

- gaining board-level commitment
- linking training to business vision and the planning process
- initiating a process of continuous development
- achieving measurable outcomes clearly related to business performance
- evaluation linked to ongoing improvement.

IIP features in two of the National Targets for Education and Training (see paragraph 3.4.8) but the number of organisations attaining the standard is below target.

Regulation by charter

4.1.19

In 1994 the then Secretary of State introduced the Charter for Further Education. Colleges were expected to develop their own charters within a national framework, consulting their customers and setting precise targets wherever possible, to help deliver a better service in their own local circumstances. The FEFC is responsible for seeing that college charters are in place, are challenging, and develop to meet new needs.

Regulation by qualifications

4.1.20

The use of the qualification system to provide indicators of quality of training is inherent in the central place which has been given to vocational qualifications in government policy (see section 5.1). But there is a chain of activities to be completed before such indicators can be valid:

- The awarding body has to be approved, by showing that its resources and procedures are adequate. Such approval is the responsibility of QCA or SQA.
- The individual NVQ/SVQ also has to be accredited (also by QCA or SQA) to ensure that it is a worthwhile qualification conforming to acceptable criteria.
- In some cases an awarding body may 'license' an education or training centre to enter candidates for the award.
- The awarding body will appoint assessors to ensure that the assessment of individual competences is of an adequate standard, and verifiers to supervise the work of assessors.

4.1.21

The whole chain is complex and potentially expensive. The reliability of qualifications as indicators of quality cannot be taken for granted. Despite the difficulties involved, however, the association of education and training with qualifications is accepted by employers and individuals as an indicator of quality.

4.1.22

Another approach to the use of qualifications to provide quality assurance in VET is the requirement by the DfEE that colleges should publish their examination results in a prescribed way.

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4.2 Financial arrangements

Note *This sub-chapter provides an overview of the financial arrangements for VET in the UK. Additional information is contained in "The financing of vocational education and training in the United Kingdom" by David Atkinson published by CEDEFOP in 1999 in its Panorama series and available on CEDEFOP's website (ETV).*

Levels of funding

4.2.1

The government's budget for England and Wales for 1997/98 includes:

- Further Education: UK£ 3.14 milliard (4.4 milliard ECU)
- Higher Education: UK£ 7.6 milliard (10.6 milliard ECU)
- Work based training for young people (Modern Apprenticeships, National Traineeships, Youth Training): UK£ 751 million (1051 MECU)
- Training for Work (unemployed adults): UK£ 424 million (594 MECU).

4.2.2

In 1994/95 public funding per year per full-time student in Further Education was UK£ 2700 (approx. 3800 ECU) and UK£ 4620 (nearly 6500 ECU) per full-time student in Higher Education. In that year educational expenditure was 5.1% of GDP.

4.2.3

In 1993 (the last year for which there are comprehensive figures) it was estimated that employers with 10 or more employees spent UK£ 10.6 milliard (15 milliard ECU) on training courses and supervised on-the-job training.

Funding policies

4.2.4

In early 1998 all government departments were undertaking a Comprehensive Spending Review of priorities and spending across all their budgets. This might lead to changes in 1999/2000 onwards in both the levels and arrangements of finance, which may also eventually be affected by the constitutional changes described in Chapter 1.

4.2.5

The present government sees expenditure on education and training as an investment rather than a cost. In its view (as expressed in *The Learning Age*):

Investing in learning benefits everyone so it should be a shared responsibility. We will encourage employers and individuals to take greater responsibility and will target public funds for student support on learners in greatest need.

4.2.6

The government has set out (also in *The Learning Age*) its principles for public funding:

Individuals, employers and the state should all contribute, directly or through earnings foregone, to the cost of learning over a lifetime because all gain from this investment.

The aim of public funding should be to widen participation and increase attainment at all levels where this will benefit society most; for example, investment in the highest levels of postgraduate research strengthens competitiveness. The following priorities for public funding are proposed:

- to guarantee help with basic skills, with courses provided free at whatever age
- to guarantee free full-time education for young people up to the age of 18
- to share with employers the cost of learning for young people in work (for example, Modern Apprenticeships)
- to share the cost of higher education with students through the new student support system
- to make provision for the highest level of postgraduate education
- to target financial help for adults on those who need it most.

4.2.7
Government funding is mostly provided from general tax revenues, but there are a number of other sources, especially

- a windfall (one-off) tax on privatised public utilities, which is being used to help finance the New Deal (paragraph 3.3.39 to 3.3.47); in 1998/99 the New Deal budget from this tax was UK£ 561.5 million (786 MECU)

- lottery money, which will contribute to training in ICT for teachers and staff of libraries

- European Social Fund; in 1998/99 UK£ 180 million (252 MECU) on government programmes in England and UK£ 358 million (about 500 MECU) on non-government programmes

- European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) for capital development.

Funding arrangements: overview

4.2.8
The basic choice in financing education and training is whether to provide funding for the providers or the individuals. The UK has adopted both approaches.

4.2.9
There is currently a wide range of public sector arrangements for funding providers of education and training in England and Wales, including the following:

- Universities and institutions of higher education are largely funded through the Higher Education Funding Council which is itself funded by the government.

- Government funding for colleges in the Further Education sector is similarly funded by the Further Education Funding Council (see paragraphs 4.2.12 to 4.2.15).

- Current expenditure by local authorities (including teachers' salaries) is met partly by the Revenue Support Grant from central government and partly by local authority revenues (e.g. income from the Council Tax and charges for local authority services).

- Grant maintained schools are funded directly by DfEE.

- Grants to TECs are made in accordance with their contracts with the government. In turn TECs fund providers of government programmes (eg Modern Apprenticeships, Training for Work) (see paragraphs 4.2.16 to 4.2.21).

- The New Deal is funded through the Employment Service (the government agency which is responsible for helping job seekers to find work).

- Small firms (up to 50 employees) can obtain training loans of between UK£ 500 and UK£ 12 500 (700 - 17 500 ECU); DfEE pays the interest.

4.2.10
There is also a range of funding arrangements for individuals, including the following:

- Mandatory grants, which have to be provided by local government bodies for university first degree students.

- Discretionary grants which can be provided by local government bodies for other students; the present system is widely thought to be inequitable and is under review.

- Student loans, available for most UK students in full-time non-postgraduate higher education (and some teacher training courses), who are aged less than 50 when the course begins; this may be raised to 55.

- Career Development Loans: people (employed and unemployed) who wish to enhance or change their career but who lack the finance to pay for training can borrow between UK£ 300 (420 ECU) and UK£ 8000 (11 200 ECU) to pay for up to 80% of course fees (100% for the unemployed) and the full cost of books, materials and other expenses. The unemployed need to have their loan application endorsed by the TEC. Since the programme started in 1988 UK£ 298 million (417 MECU) has been loaned to over 95 000 applicants. In 1998/99 17 000 applicants are expected; the budget is UK£ 12.9 million (18 MECU).

- Learning credits for young people, provided through TECs (see paragraphs 3.3.31 and 3.3.32).

- Tax relief on payments for training which count towards NVQs/GNVQs or their Scottish equivalents (but not for general education qualifications).

- Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs), introduced from 1998 to provide assistance for up to one million people, with up to UK£ 150 (210 ECU) from public funds each. There are likely to be two main approaches: universal (people at work who want to learn and will invest their own money could be entitled to ILAs) and targeted (to support particular skill needs; e.g. people without qualifications and in low-skill jobs, areas of skills shortage, employees in small firms, and those seeking to return to work).

4.2.11

Education in schools (other than private fee-paying schools) is free, and in further education will remain free for young people under 18 and for adults who are unemployed, or on income support.

4.2.12

Investment in skills is to be shared between government and employers (who will also be encouraged to contribute to their employees' ILAs). This principle of shared investment already applies to Modern Apprenticeships and will apply to National Traineeships, the New Deal, and employee training in FE sector colleges. In addition many employers pay for the training of their work force, both in-house and on external courses (see paragraphs 4.2.22 to 4.2.24).

Funding arrangements: further education

4.2.13

The funding arrangements in FE are controlled by the Further Education Funding Council, but see also Annex 5. The arrangements are complex, matching the complexity of FE provision. The system is broadly driven by units of activity which are earned by each college for:

- enrolling each student
- educating or training each student, based on the qualification(s) being studied and the continued attendance of the student; this is monitored three times per year
- each student who gains the qualification(s) studied for
- each student receiving fee exemption
- each student receiving assistance towards the cost of child care
- each student who requires additional direct learning support, eg assistance for those with disabilities, problems with literacy and numeracy.

4.2.14

About 80% of the units are earned for educating and training each student. There is a national tariff, ranging from one unit to 168 units, for each qualification.

4.2.15

Colleges negotiate their unit target with the FEFC each year taking account of each college's recent enrolment record, some quality indicators, and other factors. The FEFC then funds each college in monthly instalments up to the agreed number of units. If the college fails to enrol the planned number, or their retention of students is poor, or the achievement of qualifications is less than expected, the actual funding is reduced. Funding is not increased if enrolment targets are exceeded. Colleges which overbid and then fail to deliver will not only lose funding in that year but also risk having a lower target (and funding) set for the following year.

Funding arrangements: work based training

4.2.16
In general funding flows from DfEE to the Government Offices for the Regions, from them to TECs and from TECs to training providers, but there are differences between initial training and training for adults.

4.2.17
In training for young people finance passes from DfEE to the Government Offices for the Regions in respect of existing trainees (60% of the total) and planned new trainees (40%), based on demographic factors, and a points system in which points vary depending on the type of training (Modern Apprenticeship, National Traineeship, Youth Training) and the NVQ level at which the training is aimed.

4.2.18
TECs negotiate an annual business plan, including performance targets, with the Government Offices which then fund them on the basis of 20% for each trainee start, 50% for each trainee in training and 30% for each qualification gained.

4.2.19
TECs enter into contracts with training providers to deliver the training. There are considerable differences between the levels of funding, even as between different training providers in the same TEC area.

4.2.20
Funding for work based training for adults is in two parts, a starting payment of about UK£ 1475 (2065 ECU) and an output payment of about UK£ 525 (735 ECU) per 'output point'. Between two and four output points are gained for NVQs at levels 1-4, and four are awarded for the trainee obtaining a job.

4.2.21
Again there are many differences between TECs and in the contracts with providers. Overall, however, output related funding (ORF) is about 65% of that received by a provider. This has caused serious problems. The protagonists of ORF claim it ensures value for money, but there are doubts as to whether this is a valid claim. A provider's costs are incurred when a trainee is under training and payment on completion puts pressure on the provider to cut corners, including in some cases the fraudulent award of qualifications. The NVQ system is insufficiently robust to cope with ORF. A report by Dr Alan Felstead, published as a CEDEFOP Panorama in 1998, mentions other distortions, caused by ORF, including deterring TECs from establishing courses for women in non-traditional areas, raising barriers of entry to new training providers, leading providers to concentrate on provision which maximises ORF income rather than that which is in the best interests of the trainees on the local labour market.

Employer-funded training

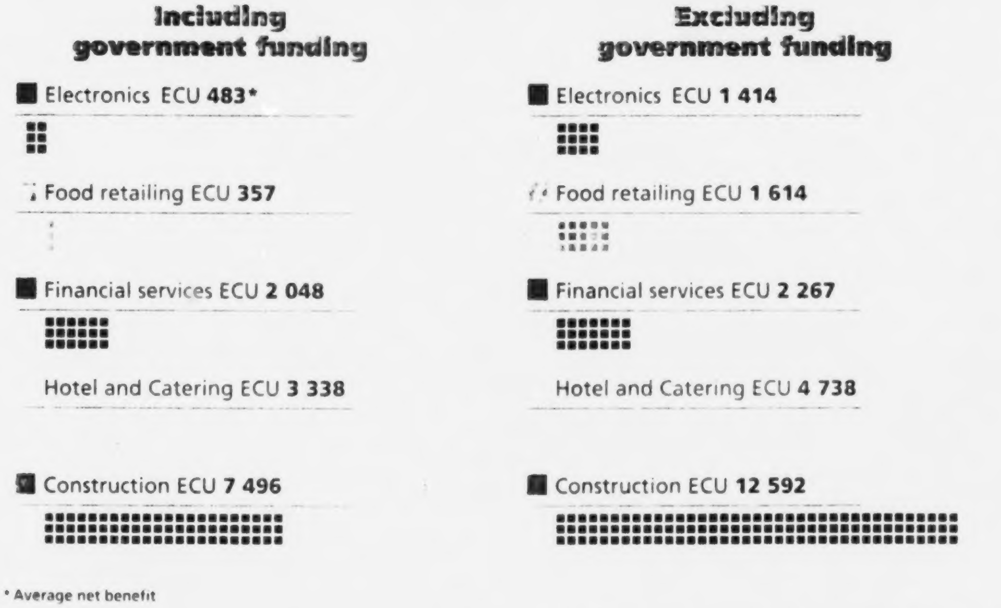
4.2.22
There is no comprehensive up-to-date information on what UK employers spend on VET. As noted in paragraph 4.2.3, in 1993 when there was a major survey, which has

not been replicated, employer-funded training amounted to UK£ 10.6 milliard (nearly 15 milliard ECU). The average cost of training per employee varied according to size of firm, from UK£ 503 (704 ECU) for those firms with 500+ employees to UK£ 749 (1050 ECU) for those with 10-24 employees. There were also wide variations in the average cost of training per employee as between business sectors, from UK£ 470 (658 ECU) in government to UK£ 1083 (1516 ECU) in office-based sectors.

4.2.23

A more recent study relating to the 1996/97 financial year looked at the average net costs of training to NVQ level 2 in five sectors, with and without government funding (e.g. Youth Training) paid directly to the employer.

Figure 28. **Average cost to employer of training to NVQ level 2 in selected sectors**



* Average net benefit

SOURCE: DERIVED FROM INSTITUTE FOR EMPLOYMENT RESEARCH

4.2.24

These wide variations in costs of training as between sectors is one of the justifications for wide variations in the TEC contracts with providers (see paragraphs 4.2.19 and 4.2.21).

The University for Industry

4.2.25

The public-private funding arrangements for the University for Industry (paragraphs 3.4.60 to 3.4.66) are particularly interesting. During the period up to UfI's launch the government has allocated UK£ 15m (21 MECU) for the financial year 1998/99 and UK£ 40 million (56 MECU) for 1999/2000. A number of development projects related to the aims of the UfI have started. They will run through to 2000 and are in part funded by the European Social Fund through the ADAPT and Objective 4 programmes.

4.2.26

Subject to confirmation by the transition team, the government's estimate of the UfI costs in its launch year of 1999/2000 is UK£ 50 million (70 MECU). After the launch period public sector funding will mainly be to support particular groups of learners. The UfI will be expected to raise its own income from a range of sources which are expected to include:

- FEFC support funding for UfI registered students
- charges for brokerage or for specialist guidance (information and advice will be free to individuals)
- payment from public funds for some purchases of UfI services, e.g. basic skills provision
- charges to employers or other organisations which provide learners with UfI's services as part of wider training programmes
- charges to providers for including learning products within the UfI portfolio
- sales of products and services commissioned directly by the UfI to companies and individuals
- franchise fees, primarily from learning centres but also from the sale of other products endorsed by the UfI
- sponsorship income
- sales of database information (subject to appropriate data protection legislation and other requirements on privacy and confidentiality), either for the marketing of learning products, or more widely, or for labour market information and analysis
- sales of rights to media companies, including, possibly, a subscription TV channel.

Chapter 5
Qualitative aspects

5.1 Certification and qualifications

Introduction

5.1.1
Since the mid-nineteenth century qualifications, awarded by independent awarding bodies and not by the state, have been central to the development of vocational education and training. In recent years qualifications have been the glue which has held together an increasingly fragmented system. The main policy thrust, both of the previous government and of the present one, has been to establish a single qualifications framework which includes both academic and vocational qualifications.

5.1.2
The current general educational qualifications (taken by pupils in schools and colleges) are GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education) normally taken at age 15-16 in a range of subjects; GCE A Level (General Certificate of Educational Advanced Level), normally taken at 18 as the main academic qualification for entry into higher education, and AS (Advanced Supplementary) Examinations.

5.1.3
In the mid-1980s the government was concerned that vocational qualifications, offered by a number of (sometimes competing) awarding bodies with different qualification structures, was too complex and unintelligible. It therefore appointed a Working Group for the Review of Vocational Qualifications which reported in 1986 and concluded:

> *the most effective way of obtaining a structure of qualifications that provides coherence, clearly understood standards and routes of progression is to harmonise existing qualifications, modified as necessary, within a new readily understandable, orderly national framework. This framework should embrace the range of achievement up to and including the higher levels of professional qualifications. We are not proposing a new qualification as such. An additional qualification is not needed and would only add to the present confusion. We recommend that vocational qualifications should be brought within the national framework - to be called the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) - and that the National Council should, by a process of accreditation of approved bodies give its seal of approval to those qualifications that meet the criteria that it lays down.*

5.1.4
However, the Review also recommended that vocational qualifications should be based on standards of competence and to emphasise the practical applications of competence within the workplace. This led in practice to the introduction of new qualifications: National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) and Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) mainly for work-based training. NVQs and SVQs are available at five levels in a wide range of subjects. There are nearly 900 NVQs in all. Subsequently General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs) and their Scottish equivalent (GSVQs) were introduced for full-time students as a route into both work and higher education; GNVQs/GSVQs are available in 14 subjects at three levels.

5.1.5

The National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ) was established in 1987 to accredit qualifications; it was not itself an awarding body. In Scotland, such accreditation was made the responsibility of the main Scottish awarding body for vocational education and training, SCOTVEC. The government policy of drawing together academic and vocational qualifications was implemented in part by the merger of SCOTVEC and the Scottish Examinations Board (for schools) in early 1997 to form the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), followed in England and Wales by the merger of NCVQ and the Schools Curriculum and Assessment Authority (SCAA) in autumn 1997 to form the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA).

5.1.6

The Review of Vocational Qualifications envisaged that in time all vocational qualifications would be admitted into the framework of NVQs. However the development of strict criteria for NVQs meant that most existing qualifications failed to meet these criteria and were therefore outside the framework. For a long time it was assumed that all non-NVQs would in time disappear, but this did not happen.

5.1.7

By 1996 the 'national framework' had three recognised tracks, the academic (GCSE and A levels), the broadly vocational (GNVQs) and the vocational (NVQs). Nevertheless there were still a large number of 'other' vocational qualifications which did not fall into these categories.

The NVQ/SVQ framework

5.1.8

The NVQ framework is the national structure *'for ordering NVQs according to progressive levels of achievement and areas of competence'*. In Scotland a similar framework of Scottish Vocational Qualifications is operated by SQA. SVQs and NVQs are nationally recognised awards.

5.1.9

NVQs and SVQs have five levels which are not related to the levels established by the European Community for the purpose of comparability of qualifications. These five levels have been defined in a way which is intended to be indicative rather than prescriptive:

> ***Level 1*** - *competence which involves the application of knowledge in the performance of a range of varied work activities, most of which may be routine or predictable;*
>
> ***Level 2*** - *competence which involves the application of knowledge in a significant range of varied work activities, performed in a variety of contexts. Some of the activities are complex or non-routine and there is some individual responsibility and autonomy. Collaboration with others, perhaps through membership of a work group or team, may often be a requirement;*
>
> ***Level 3*** - *competence which involves the application of knowledge in a broad range of varied work activities performed in a wide variety of contexts, most of*

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which are complex and non-routine. There is considerable responsibility and autonomy and control or guidance of others is often required;

Level 4 *- competence which involves the application of knowledge in a broad range of complex technical or professional work activities performed in a wide variety of contexts and with a substantial degree of personal responsibility and autonomy. Responsibility for the work of others and the allocation of resources is often present;*

Level 5 *- competence which involves the application of a significant range of fundamental principles across a wide and often unpredictable variety of contexts. Very substantial personal autonomy and often significant responsibility for the work of others and for the allocation of substantial resources feature strongly, as do personal accountabilities for analysis and diagnosis, design, planning, execution and evaluation.*

5.1.10

NVQs/SVQs are made up of units, which themselves comprise elements of competence, together with range statements (which show the range of situations in which it is expected that particular competences will be exercised), and performance criteria, which provide the basis for assessment.

5.1.11

NVQs/SVQs are based on outcomes, i.e. what the trainee is able to do, and on credit accumulation, so that units of competence can be achieved in a wide range of different ways and over a period of time, and can then be combined into an NVQ/SVQ. None of the three main characteristics of NVQs/SVQs (competence-based outcomes, total modularisation and credit accumulation) were new in themselves, as all were features of various qualification and training systems since the late 1960s. The NVQ/SVQ Framework, however, brought together what were previously isolated developments into a single national system of great potential flexibility, capable of being applied to almost any circumstance. For example, because the concentration is on outcomes rather than on how competences were obtained, there is a great deal of interest in the Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL). NVQs/SVQs can be obtained by APL, with an awarding body ready to accept a variety of evidence to show that someone has reached the necessary standards of competence.

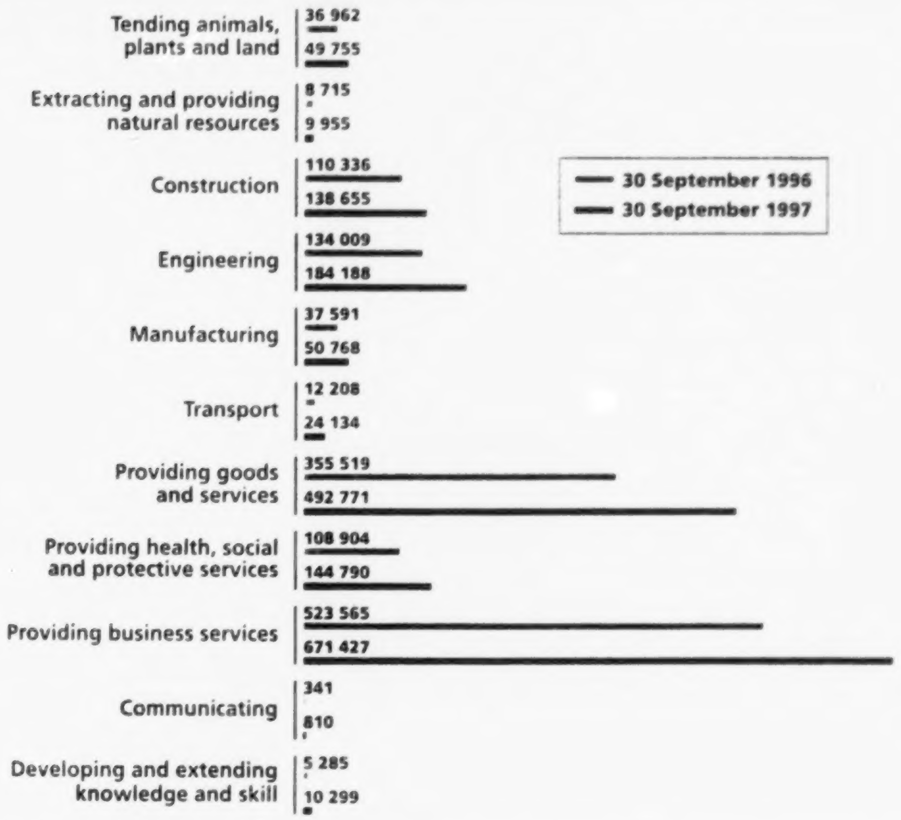
5.1.12

NVQs recognise competence in the workplace, with evidence of performance assessed on-the-job, where possible, on an ongoing basis.

5.1.13

Despite the government drive to make NVQs acceptable their adoption by some industries has been slow, as the following figure shows.

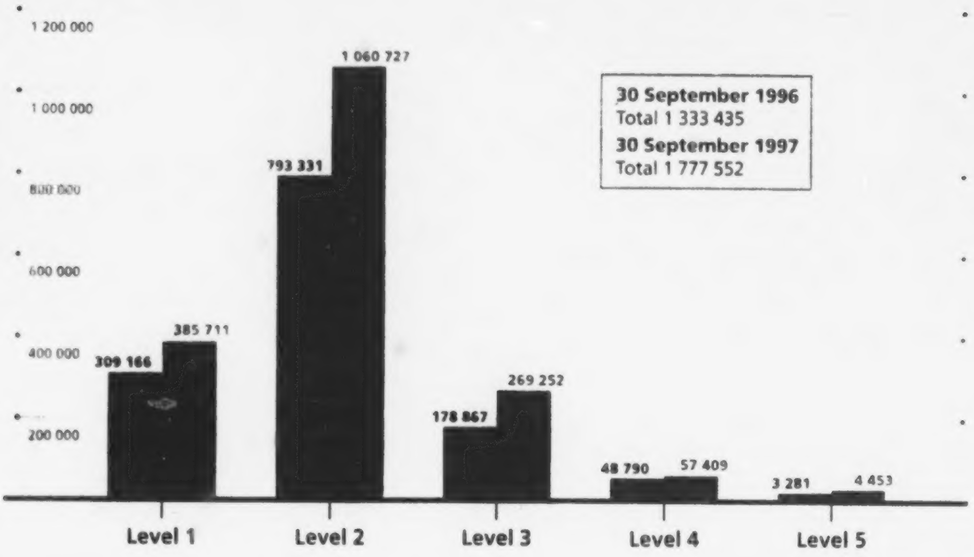
Figure 29. **Accumulative total of NVQ certificates awarded in each framework area to the end of September 1996 and 1997**



SOURCE QCA

5.1.14
The great majority of NVQs have been awarded at Levels 1 and 2.

Figure 30. **Accumulative total of NVQ certificates awarded at each level to the end of September 1996 and 1997**



Source: **QCA**

5.1.15
The two millionth NVQ was awarded in September 1998.

Accreditation

5.1.16
NCVQ set out fundamental criteria for the accreditation of a qualification as an NVQ. These are that a qualification must be:

- *based on national standards required for performance in employment, and take into account future needs with regard to technology, markets and employment;*
- *based on assessments of the outcomes of learning, normally arrived at independently of any particular mode, duration or location of learning;*
- *awarded on the basis of valid and reliable assessments which ensures that performance to the national standards can be achieved at work;*
- *free from unnecessary barriers restricting access and progression, and available to all those who are able to reach the required standard by whatever means;*
- *free from overt or covert discriminatory practices of any kind.*

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5.1.17

The SQA criteria for SVQs are similar but have specific references to 'progression', 'educational needs' and to type of contents stating that SVQs should *'be designed to allow breadth of application and reflect needs associated with problem solving, task management, personal effectiveness and the ability to transfer skills and knowledge to new situations'*.

Other qualifications

5.1.18

Despite the assumption that qualifications other than NVQs and GNVQs (and their Scottish equivalents) would disappear, they have continued to flourish, probably because of

- the recognition which is accorded to existing qualifications and which cannot easily be matched by a new qualification, however well designed
- the fact that 'other' qualifications meet a need which is not met by NVQs and GNVQs.

5.1.19

In summer 1997 there were 14 413 different qualifications listed in the database of the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC). The table below shows the numbers in different categories.

Table 23. **Qualifications listed in FEFC qualifications database**

GCSE *	1 598
GCE A and AS level *	1 752
Access to HE	1 155
NVQ	1 811
GNVQ	216
Other	7 881

* See paragraphs 2.5.8 and 2.5.9

SOURCE **EDUCA**

5.1.20

A more important indicator of the relative importance of 'other' qualifications is in terms of the number of certificates awarded. The following table shows the number of qualifications awarded in FEFC-funded provision in 1995/96.

Table 24. Qualifications awarded in FEFC-funded provision 1995/96 (thousands)

	GCE & GCSE	GNVQ	NVQ	Other
Level 1		7.1	26.2	707.1
2	225.2	34.2	96.0	275.1
3	285.5	32.8	46.6	224.3
4/5			12.0	68.9
Unspecified				849.0
Total	**510.7**	**74.1**	**180.8**	**2124.4**

SOURCE **EDUCA**

5.1.21

Analysis of the level of other qualifications shows that unlike NVQs (paragraph 5.1.14) over 50% are at Level 3 or above.

Table 25. Other qualifications by level

	Number	%
Entry	164	2.1
Level 1	1378	17.5
Level 2	1765	22.4
Level 3	2015	25.6
Level 4 and above	1975	25.1
Unknown	584	7.4
Total	**7881**	**100.0**

SOURCE **EDUCA**

5.1.22

However, many of the so called qualifications on FEFC's database were quite narrow in scope and more similar to units than to 'qualifications'. Of those 'other' qualifications currently on the database which are clearly less than a full qualification, around two thirds appear to be less than half the width of a full qualification. Examples of the range of topics covered by these 'qualifications' are:

- certificates in First Aid, emergency and safety procedures and Sea Survival
- hygiene and nutrition certificates
- certificates comparable to key skills (numeracy, communication and IT)
- single language certificates, often comparable in scope to a single GCSE
- single subjects in secretarial and office skills
- music and dance graded exams and performers' exams

- sports coaching, usually in specific sports
- individual beauty treatments (e.g. manicure)
- specific skills certificates and proficiency tests.

5.1.23
Indicators of the growing recognition of the place of 'other' qualifications can be seen in:

- the willingness of FEFC, NACETT and others to recognise appropriate 'other' qualifications as contributing to national targets

- the design framework for the New Deal which accepts that trainees may follow qualifications other than NVQs and GNVQs

- continuing work by RSA, City & Guilds and other awarding bodies to develop new qualifications.

The result, however, is that the qualifications scene is in many ways more complex than before the Review of Vocational Qualifications reported in 1986.

Setting standards

5.1.24
QCA and SQA are the top of the pyramid which regulates training standards through qualifications. At the base of the pyramid are the bodies which determine (or endorse) agreed statements of competence. When NCVQ was originally established in the mid-1980s, these bodies were known as Lead Bodies (LBs) and were intended to be led by employers, working with employees (including trade unions) and education and training advisers. Their activities, known as the Standards Programme, were coordinated and partly financed by the then Department for Employment.

5.1.25
As the number of lead bodies multiplied to over 150, the previous government tried to control this escalation by amalgamating some into Occupational Standards Councils (OSCs). During 1997 a further amalgamation of ITOs, LBs and OSCs to form National Training Organisations (NTOs) was initiated (see paragraphs 3.2.9 to 3.2.15), and is expected to be completed by the end of 1998.

5.1.26
In April 1998 QCA took over from DfEE the responsibility for maintaining the Standards Programme.

Awarding bodies

5.1.27
Between the NTOs and QCA, and responsible for arranging the assessment of competence and the award of qualifications, are the awarding bodies. Until 1997 there were five major vocational awarding bodies in England and Wales: Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC); City and Guilds of London Institute

(C & G); London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI); Pitman Examinations Institute (PEI); Royal Society of Arts (RSA). These five offered qualifications in a wide range of subjects with hundreds of thousands of candidates annually. There are many other awarding bodies which offer narrower ranges of qualifications and have far fewer candidates. In all there are some 600 awarding bodies if all professional bodies are included, many of whom have had qualifications accredited as NVQs.

5.1.28

Some of these bodies are of long standing: the RSA first set examinations in 1852 and City and Guilds in 1879. More recently, in England the Business Education Council and the Technician Education Council were established in the early 1970s; a decade later they merged to form BTEC. Then in 1985 the Scottish Technical Education Council and the Scottish Business Education Council amalgamated to form SCOTVEC. In 1991 City and Guilds of London Institute took over the Pitman Examinations Institute. In 1992 BTEC changed its name to the Business and Technology Education Council, retaining the same initials.

5.1.29

The previous government had adopted a policy of reducing the number of schools awarding bodies by mergers and also encouraged mergers between the school and the main vocational awarding bodies, in parallel with the mergers of the accrediting bodies (see paragraph 5.1.5 above). By late 1997 the following mergers had taken place:

- BTEC with the University of London Examinations and Assessment Council to form EDEXCEL
- City and Guilds, the Associated Examinations Board and the Northern Examinations and Assessment Board have together formed the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance
- The RSA Examinations Board have formed a new unitary awarding body with the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate.

The delivery of NVQs/SVQs and other qualifications

5.1.30

The logical conclusion of the characteristics of the NVQ/SVQ framework is that the process of acquiring competence should be virtually irrelevant to those responsible for the provision of education and training. This concept has indeed led to considerable interest in ORF - Output Related Funding of training - in which grants to training organisations should be based (in part at least) on results. However, given the nature of training delivery, it is not possible to take logic that far. Training allowances or credits tend to be paid on a time basis, and those responsible for delivering education and training are paid salaries and wages based on the amount of work they do rather than on the achievements of their trainees. It is therefore not possible to eliminate time-based learning from the point of view of those providing such opportunities; this provides tensions with the flexibility of duration and mode which NVQs make possible.

5.1.31

Within institutions themselves there is a greater move towards individualised learning plans and self-paced learning. There are, however, constraints in making institutions almost totally 'roll-on/roll-off', with students able to start when they like, proceed at their own pace and complete when they are able. Above all, the school leaving date in England and Wales comes at a fixed time of the year. The beginning of the academic year at universities and other institutions of higher education is also at a fixed time of year.

5.1.32

In England the management methodology which enables institutions to provide at least some of the flexibility inherent in the NVQ Framework is gradually being developed, but most institutions are still organised on a course basis. There are indeed some advantages in the traditional course structure for young people in their first two years after leaving school. Whether they are in college full-time or part-time, it is often considered beneficial that they should have a coherent course and not just be aiming at individual modules, as could happen if credit accumulation were taken to its logical conclusion, as it may be (see paragraph 5.1.35).

5.1.33

In Scotland there is more experience to draw on since the modular National Certificate was introduced in 1984. However, institutional versatility is still an issue there also.

5.1.34

The Further and Higher Education Act 1992 empowers the Secretaries of State for Education and Employment and for Wales to approve qualifications for 16-18 year old students. The original intention was that these reserve powers would be used to ensure that colleges and schools offered only NVQs and GNVQs (or units or modules which are part of them) to students following vocational options. Colleges and awarding bodies were to be encouraged to replace older-style vocational qualifications with GNVQs and NVQs, and their Scottish equivalents as soon as possible, and thus provide a framework which was flexible and well understood. However, the funding regime encouraged the emergence of large numbers of qualifications other than NVQs and GNVQs. It is estimated that there are over 16 000 (including NVQs) separately identifiable qualifications in post-compulsory education and training, awarded by over 600 awarding bodies.

The future

5.1.35

During 1997/8 QCA held a major consultation on the future shape of academic and vocational qualifications. The resulting recommendations were:

- all publicly-funded qualifications - including those at advanced level - should be located within a national qualifications framework based on six levels of award, including an entry level (i.e. below the current Level 1);

- the regulatory bodies should engage in systematic discussions with interest groups, including providers and users, to establish the range of qualifications in each field likely to maximise participation, achievement and progression;

- all qualifications should be admitted to the framework at the appropriate level;

- work should be undertaken to study the implications of a unit-based credit framework, with a report to DfEE in December 1998.

5.1.36

In April 1998 QCA took over responsibility for the programme for setting occupational standards and also for monitoring the list of approved qualifications (see paragraph 5.1.34). Thus in future there could be greater coherence in the development and implementation of policies on qualifications.

Northern Ireland

5.1.37

Northern Ireland largely uses the vocational qualifications available in England and Wales, but in some cases those awarded in Scotland are preferred. Responsibility for qualifications other than NVQs (which rests with QCA) lies with the Council for Curriculums, Examinations and Assessment.

5.2 Training of trainers

5.2.1

Most of the government encouragement for training of trainers in industry has recently been focused on encouraging the development of standards for trainers' qualifications (including for those involved in the NVQ assessment process). There are two approaches:

- the standards set out in some detail the tasks which have to be achieved

- the standards are very general, and can be reached by a number of different routes which are thus treated as being of equal value.

The training for NVQ/SVQ assessors and verifiers has followed the first approach, but the general training of trainers has followed the second. Thus there are no longer specific trainer qualifications (or indeed standards) relating to Open Learning or the use of IT in training.

5.2.2

The standards, which are the responsibility of the Employment National Training Organisation (ENTO), make up four National/Scottish Vocational Qualifications in Training and Development, one at level 3, two at level 4 and one at level 5. In Spring 1998 ENTO started on a new round of analysis and consultation for new Training of Trainers standards.

5.2.3

There are no specific incentives, other than those provided by their employers, for trainers to improve their training. However, if they are members of the Institute of Personnel and Development (as many are) they are required to undertake Continuous Professional Development (CPD) in order to retain their membership.

5.2.4

In Further Education staff training is the responsibility of individual colleges. In future the remit of the Teacher Training Agency may be extended to FE (paragraph 2.9.1 and 2.9.2).

5.2.5

A major programme of Quality in Information and Learning Technology (QUILT), to improve the ICT skills of FE teachers, is being implemented by the Further Education Development Agency.

5.3 Research

5.3.1

Research, mostly applied, into aspects of vocational education and training, is carried out or sponsored by the Further Education Development Agency (FEDA), the Scottish Further Education Unit (SFEU), many branches of DfEE and the major accrediting awarding bodies. Some ITBs carried out important research projects, but the ITOs were generally insufficiently resourced to carry forward this tradition, and NTOs are too new for this to be seen as one of their major functions. Research projects relevant to their areas have been initiated by many TECs and LECs. Many of the education authorities in all parts of the UK have also undertaken some research in vocational education.

5.3.2

Research into the technology of education and training has been sponsored or carried out by the then Learning Technologies Unit of the Employment Department (now the Training Technology Unit of DfEE), the National Council for Education Technology (NCET) and the Scottish Council for Educational Technology (SCET).

5.3.3

The amount of educational and training research in the UK has been large, and it has been influential in supporting the many innovations of the last decade. However, there is a lack of coherence, and some duplication, in the research provision, despite considerable efforts to eliminate overlap.

Chapter 6
Trends and perspectives

6.1 Social and economic trends

Introduction

6.1.1
Although governments influence the provision of VET, they have to operate in a context of changing social and economic factors over which they have little or no control. If the trends are benign the government may take the credit; if malign, the blame. If the government tries to regulate the context it runs the risk of triggering the Law of Unintended Consequences (paragraphs 6.1.14 to 6.1.16).

6.1.2
These trends can be considered under the headings of:

- Population and employment (paragraphs 6.1.3 and 6.1.4)
- The economy and employment (paragraphs 6.1.5 to 6.1.9)
- The future of work (paragraphs 6.1.10 to 6.1.13).

Population and employment

6.1.3
As noted in paragraph 1.2.5 the next decade will see first a slight rise and then a gradual decline in 16-19 year olds, feeding through into the 20-24 year old age group. At the same time there will be a rise in numbers of people of pensionable age. In itself, this trend would be unlikely to create difficulties for enterprises, but it underlies other trends. In particular the assumed 16-64 working life is being cut at both ends by a greater proportion of young people remaining in full time education (paragraphs 2.5.13 and 3.3.4) and by considerable numbers who take early retirement. To quite a large extent this is offset by the high (compared with the EU average) activity rates of women (paragraph 1.3.8). The stereotyping of occupations by gender is gradually breaking down, and women are slowly, but increasingly, being promoted to senior posts. Already they outnumber men in obtaining higher education qualifications (paragraph 2.8.6), and recently started to outnumber men in Modern Apprenticeship starts (paragraph 3.3.17).

6.1.4
Although ethnic minorities receive a lot of attention in media reports, nationally they remain a small proportion of the population. In certain locations, however, they are substantial minorities or in the majority. As noted in paragraph 1.5.1 there are high proportions of workless households among some ethnic groups (especially African and Pakistani/Bangladeshi), although the Indian community has fewer workless households that the white population. There are particular problems with those communities who do not speak English at home (paragraph 1.5.2). For some commentators it is ironic that the European Commission does not treat Hindi and Urdu as minority European languages, although the speakers of these languages are now British citizens.

The economy and employment

6.1.5

The globalisation of economies means that:

- no national economy is insulated against recession, or boom, in other parts of the world

- enterprises, in service sectors as well as manufacturing, can switch activities to any part of the world where the equation of price, productivity and convenience is most beneficial.

6.1.6

Governments cannot control this trend towards globalisation by legislation or regulation. They can provide the infrastructure to help enterprises and individuals survive, and indeed prosper, in the global market place. The University for Industry (paragraphs 3.4.60 to 3.4.66) is an example. But the prime responsibility for survival and success rests with the individuals and enterprises themselves.

6.1.7

Many of the enterprises which will need to compete globally will be small. As noted in paragraph 3.1.15, the exemption of small companies from the levy under the Industrial Training Act contributed to the non-training culture of small businesses in the UK. Although the MSC, later the Employment Department and now the Department for Education and Employment and the TECs have made various attempts to persuade small enterprises to train, the results have not been impressive. One of the problems is the sheer number of small enterprises. Another, more subtle, problem is the broad classification of SME (Small and Medium-sized Enterprises) widely used in the UK, and indeed in the EU as a whole. This blanket classification disguises the fact that the training needs, and solutions, for medium sized enterprises may be closer to those of large enterprises than small ones, and that different sizes of small enterprises have different types of training requirements. A more sophisticated classification might help identify the training needs better and enable more focused solutions to be applied.

6.1.8

If they are to compete in the global market place enterprises must raise their productivity. One of the causes of low productivity appears to be lack of investment in new equipment, which in turn is partly due to a venture capital system which looks for early, rather than long term, returns. However another cause seems to be low levels of training and retraining. Again the prime responsibility for overcoming this lack of training rests with the enterprises themselves.

6.1.9

A potential advantage which the UK has in the global market place is the emergence of English as the most used international language. However, full exploitation of this advantage is likely to be limited while literacy rates remain low (paragraph 1.4.3). Poor literacy may also be a contributory factor to low productivity. Modern manufacturing, as well as service industries, has fewer demands on skills of hand and eye and more on knowledge and the ability to read and learn from manuals, and to communicate effectively. Poor spelling and grammar, and a limited vocabulary, are now major barriers to employability. The irony is that it is almost certainly easier to provide training in basic skills for the completely illiterate than to increase the literacy skills of those who can read and write, but insufficiently well for the needs of today.

The future of work

6.1.10

Employability is not only being affected by global competition but also by developments in information and communications technology (ICT) and by the way work is organised.

6.1.11

Developments in ICT (personal computers, faxes, mobile telephones, audio and video conferencing, e-mail, the Internet and the World Wide Web) are changing the way everyone works, and also learns. So far in most instances there is a transfer or enhancement of existing work practices to ICT, an incremental advance which everyone can appreciate. But some of the technologies already available (eg voice recognition which enables someone to dictate directly to a computer), and others in the pipeline (e.g. interactive digital TV) are likely to be revolutionary rather than evolutionary. The practice of attendance at a fixed workplace may well be superseded in many cases.

6.1.12

As a result of ICT developments, but for reasons of cost effectiveness also, the organisation of work is changing. In particular there is much more outsourcing by enterprises instead of employing specialist personnel in-house. The people to whom work is outsourced will often be self-employed or in small enterprises. Patterns of employment are likely to change. Jobs for life no longer exist; nor do occupations for life.

6.1.13

The Royal Society for Arts has published a report: *Redefining Work*, which analyses the changes in work, jobs and careers. Here it is sufficient to note its conclusion that the education system is not geared up to prepare people for the new world of work.

The Law of Unintended Consequences

6.1.14

Individuals and enterprises are likely to take action to further what they perceive to be their own best interests. This is a very powerful force which often leads to actions by governments having side effects which were never intended: the Law of Unintended Consequences. A well-known example is that regulation to protect the rights of workers actually creates unemployment.

6.1.15

Other examples referred to in this publication include:

- the possible effect of the New Deal on Modern Apprenticeships (paragraph 3.3.16)

- changes in the VET infrastructure undermining Open Learning (paragraph 3.4.42)
- Output related funding, intended to improve the cost effectiveness of training, leading to distortion of provision and fraud (paragraph 4.2.21)
- The introduction of NVQs, intended to simplify the structure of vocational qualifications, contributing to make that structure even more complex (paragraph 5.1.23).

6.1.16

To avoid invoking the Law of Unintended Consequences government intervention needs to be positive rather than restrictive, inclusive rather than exclusive, with full consideration of possible side effects. In many cases the unintended consequences can be anticipated and countered by adjustments to any government intervention.

6.2 A change of government

Education! Education! Education!

6.2.1

The writing of this monograph is being completed approximately fifteen months after the election of the Labour government in May 1997 after 18 years out of office. Indeed the writing was delayed in part to allow time for major policy lines to emerge. As might have been expected from the election slogan 'Education! Education! Education!' the impact of the new government on the education system is considerable.

6.2.2

What has been interesting to an outside observer is the ways in which the new government has so far preserved most of the changes in the VET infrastructure made by its predecessor, but has used them as launching pads for important new initiatives, which are intended to have lasting effects. The speed with which these initiatives have been launched is partly due to the fact that, outside the schools framework and the creation of the Training Standards Council, no major changes in the infrastructure have so far been required (but see Annex 5).

Constitutional change and the infrastructure

6.2.3

Even the greatest constitutional change, devolution of powers to elected Scottish and Welsh assemblies, had been foreshadowed at civil service levels in education and training which had become the responsibilities of the Scottish Office and Welsh Office.

6.2.4

In England, the Regional Development Agencies, which may evolve into elected regional assemblies, are based on Government Offices for the Regions, created by the previous government.

6.2.5

The government also seems to be comfortable with the other major constitutional changes of its predecessor:

- the merger of the Department for Education and the Employment Department to form the Department for Education and Employment
- the removal of Further Education and Sixth Form Colleges from local education authority control to be autonomous 'corporations', funded through the Further Education Funding Council in England, with similar arrangements in Scotland and Wales.

6.2.6

The government initially built on the infrastructure created or initiated by its predecessor (but see also Annex 5):

- TECs (LECs in Scotland) for local implementation of training policies and programmes
- NTOs (rather than Industrial Training Boards) for sectoral input on training
- the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and the Scottish Qualifications Authority for the oversight of qualifications, both vocational and academic
- NACETT for overseeing national targets.

6.2.7

There are a number of minor changes to the infrastructure bodies or the way in which they operate, for example

- making college governance more accountable, especially to the local community
- putting less emphasis on the dominance of NVQs/GNVQs (and their Scottish equivalents) and greater acceptance of other vocational qualifications.

6.2.8

Although in the longer term the major constitutional changes in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, and eventually England, are likely to affect the overall infrastructure of education and training in the UK, in the short and medium term the government's use of what exists has given it a flying start in converting visions into reality.

The European Union

6.2.9

Although many UK organisations and institutions have been successful in obtaining EU funding for projects in VET, the impact of the EU on the UK system remains minimal. There are several reasons for this, including:

- Although the government has reversed the position of its predecessor on Social Fund programmes and hopes to maximise the UK's share of EU funds, the total involved, although important in some localities, is marginal in relation to the national funding of VET.

- Projects are seldom sustained; once the project funding ceases so does the activity.

- The current EU funding rules, and arrangements for payment, compare unfavourably with the funding of projects by DfEE and are a deterrent to some applicants.

6.2.10

The main reason for lack of impact, however, is that the UK, both under the previous government and the present one, has undertaken considerable innovations in VET. These innovations are not only often in advance of developments in other EU Member States, but also demand considerable effort on behalf of staff at all levels if the organisation or institution is to benefit from them. So attention tends to be focused on developments which are internal to the UK.

Visions and their implementation

6.2.11

Like its predecessor the government has overall goals for job creation, employability and competitiveness. Its strategies for meeting these goals are wide ranging. Those which impinge on education and training are

- a highly educated, well trained workforce, able to adapt to the new information based technologies of the future,

- the creation of a learning society in which people continue to acquire and update knowledge and skills throughout their working lives,

- active policies to reconnect to the labour market those excluded through discrimination, deprivation or inadequate educational standards, in particular action to help women returning to the labour market.

6.2.12

But this government has been able to inject a new sense of vision into its strategies, whether they are about quality in schools, reintegrating the alienated, widening access to further education or creating a learning society. The quotation below is taken from the Foreword by David Blunkett (Secretary of State for Education and Employment) to the UfI Pathfinder Prospectus:

> *Our aim is a society where people and businesses take control of their destinies to build the future. This means capitalising on the far-reaching developments in technology and learning that are sweeping through the world today.*
>
> *Everyone, regardless of their background or circumstances, should have the opportunity to take control of their own career and realise their own ambitions. It is no longer good enough to expect some people to spend a lifetime bounded by low horizons and limited opportunities.*
>
> *Every business should strive to maximise its potential to compete in today's increasingly global markets. It is no longer good enough for some businesses to expect that they can compete by doing more of the same.*

> *Learning is the key to this - the key to individual employability and business competitiveness. And it should not stop when people leave formal education. We all need to carry on learning to develop our careers, build security, and enable ourselves and our families to make the most of life. Businesses need to keep improving and updating the skills, knowledge and creativity of their workforces if they are to compete to win in world markets.*
>
> *This Government puts education at the heart of its ambitions. We want to build a learning revolution among children, adults and organisations alike. The University for Industry will lead this revolution.*

6.2.13

Visions raise people's expectations, a two-edged sword. Raised expectations can help towards implementation, but if the vision is not realised then disillusion can set in. This is why it is so important to be able to turn the visions into actions which can be implemented.

6.2.14

At the time of writing the visions have been expressed and the many, often mundane, tasks of implementation have begun. Some of these tasks predate the government but have been harnessed to the newly expressed visions. Many have been described or foreshadowed in this publication; others have still to be designed. All will need resources and collaboration between all concerned.

Information technology

6.2.15

Another vision relates to the contribution of Information Technology. The quotation below is taken from Prime Minister Tony Blair's Foreword to *Our Information Age*:

> *Information is the key to the modern age. The new age of information offers possibilities for the future limited only by the boundaries of our imaginations. The potential of the new electronic networks is breathtaking - the prospect of change as widespread and fundamental as the agricultural and industrial revolutions of earlier eras.*
>
> *I want to ensure that everyone in the United Kingdom has the best chance to seize this moment - our information age which offers new opportunities for greater prosperity, and a better quality of life.*
>
> *Britain's dynamism, creativity, drive and enterprise fit closely with the new age of information. English is the common language of the Internet. I am determined to ensure that Britain is at the forefront of these new developments, as companies around the world link up in new forms of electronic commerce and individuals increasingly connect electronically, cutting across the restrictions of time and distance. The wired society is no longer a futurist's dream - but the new practical reality.*
>
> *Information technology is central to our key priority of improving education for all - making Britain better. The vigour and innovation of new developments like*

the increasing convergence of broadcasting, telecommunications and computing will be reflected in our proposals to modernise government in Britain, including a modernised 10 Downing Street Web site. And the University for Industry will help deliver the widest available access to new forms of learning. The new opportunities of the new information age must be open to all - the many, not just the few.

In this policy statement, we set out our ideas on how the Government will act to enable people to take advantage of the new information age - a co-ordinated strategy which will focus on transforming education, widening access, promoting competition and competitiveness, fostering quality and modernising government. The prize of this new age is to engage our country fully in the ambition and opportunity which the digital revolution offers. That prize is there for the taking. We must stretch out our hands and grasp it.

6.2.16
The implementation of this vision in education and training is through:

- the National Grid for Learning (paragraphs 3.2.40 to 3.2.43)
- The University for Industry (paragraphs 3.4.60 to 3.4.66)
- support for IT in libraries (paragraphs 3.4.54 to 3.4.57)
- Centres of Excellence for IT (paragraph 3.4.58)
- the Curriculum for teacher training (paragraph 2.9.2).

Collaboration

6.2.17
The previous government believed in the power of competition to create progress. The present government is convinced that competition is wasteful. The rubric of one of the chapters in *Further Education for the New Millennium* says:

The Government believes that the excessive emphasis in the past on market competition has inhibited collaboration; and that strong partnerships are now needed to develop efficient local strategies for learning.

6.2.18
There are two alternatives to competition:

- co-ordination and control
- networking.

The problem is that whichever approach is adopted there are costs:

- Competition is expensive, both in terms of the cost of the marketing efforts of the institutions which compete with each other, and of the attitudes engendered.
- For co-ordination to be effective there needs to be a bureaucracy to enforce it, in addition to the time spent by the institutions to persuade the bureaucracy of the merits of their cause.

- Networking does not happen on its own; it needs people to make and maintain the contacts, and multi-lateral meetings are expensive, which becomes clear if they are costed properly.

The different costs, however, come out of different pockets.

6.2.19
The Ufl is conceived as an exemplar of collaboration, a system which routes the would-be learner to the most appropriate good quality provision. It is likely to be more efficient than competition, but it is unlikely to cost any less. And this introduces the issue of resources.

Resources

6.2.20
As noted in paragraph 4.2.4, until the result of the Comprehensive Spending Review is digested, there will not be any major allocation of new resources, either for maintaining the systems as they are or for implementation of the visions.

6.2.21
In the meantime the government has found some additional funds from general resources for early implementation of initiatives, and is also tapping other sources, for example

- windfall tax on utilities for primary school class size reduction and the New Deal
- National Lottery money for training teachers in ICT skills and for digitisation of education and cultural materials held by public libraries
- EU Structural Funds for the Ufl pilot projects (the previous government was wary of tapping this source)
- TEC reserves for Individual Learning Accounts.

6.2.22
The Ufl, as the 'flagship' of the government's vision for lifelong learning, will be costly to implement properly. The funding arrangements described in paragraphs 4.2.25 and 4.2.26 are imaginative but untried. Not everyone believes that they will provide an adequate income. The real test, not only for the Ufl but for implementing all the government's visions, is how much additional government money will be available, how much can be raised from private sector companies and individuals investing in their own learning, and how it will flow round the system.

6.2.23
The General Secretary of the lecturer's union, NATFHE, has warned that *the foul taste of disappointment from so many underfunded initiatives hangs over every government proposal.*

Conclusion

6.2.24

After over a year in office the government has raised expectations, at least among those involved in vocational education and training. There is an atmosphere of some excitement, virtually no criticism of the goals and strategies, and a hope that resources will be sufficient to enable the visions to be implemented. If they can be, even in part, VET in the UK will have moved into a new age.

Annexes

Annex 1

List of acronyms and sets of initials

AB	Awarding Body
ACE	Action for Community Employment (Northern Ireland)
ALBSU	Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit, now Basic Skills Agency
APL	Accreditation of Prior Learning (also sometimes termed APEL - accreditation of prior experiential learning or APA - accreditation of prior achievement)
AQA	Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (an awarding body)
BECTa	British Educational Communications and Technology Agency
BSA	Basic Skills Agency
BTEC	Business and Technician Education Council (until 1992) Business and Technology Education Council (from 1992) (now part of EDEXCEL)
CBI	Confederation of British Industry
C&G	City and Guilds of London Institute
CGLI	City and Guilds of London Institute (old abbreviation, but still sometimes used)
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
DED	Department of Economic Development (Northern Ireland)
DENI	Department of Education for Northern Ireland
DES	Department of Education and Science (to July 1992)
DFE	Department for Education (from July 1992) (now part of DfEE)
DfEE	Department for Education and Employment
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
EAV	Examining and validating (body)
ED	Employment Department (now part of DfEE)
EDEXCEL	The EDEXCEL Foundation (an awarding body)
ESF	European Social Fund
FE	Further Education
FEDA	Further Education Development Agency
FEFC	Further Education Funding Council
FEFCW	Further Education Funding Council for Wales
GCE	General Certificate of Education
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
GNVQ	General National Vocational Qualification
GSVQ	General Scottish Vocational Qualification
GTC	Government Training Centre
HE	Higher Education
HEFC	Higher Education Funding Council
HEQC	Higher Education Quality Council
HoReCa	Hotel, Restaurant and Catering
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ILA	Individual Learning Account
IT	Information Technology
ITB	Industrial Training Board
ITO	Industry Training Organisation
JTP	Job Training Programme (Northern Ireland)
LB	Lead Body
LCCI	London Chamber of Commerce and Industry
LEA	Local Education Authority

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LEC	Local Enterprise Company
LSC	Learning and Skills Council
MSC	Manpower Services Commission (now part of DfEE)
NACETT	National Advisory Council for Education and Training Targets
NCET	National Council for Educational Technology (now BECTa)
NCVQ	National Council for Vocational Qualifications (now part of QCA)
NFER	National Foundation for Educational Research
NIFER	Northern Ireland Foundation for Educational Research
NRA	National Record of Achievement
NTET	National Target for Education and Training
NTO	National Training Organisation
NTONC	National Training Organisations National Council
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
OLF	Open Learning Foundation
ORF	Output Related Funding
OSC	Occupational Standards Council
PIC	Private Industry Council
PQ	Pitman Qualifications
QCA	Qualifications and Curriculum Authority
QUILT	Quality in Information and Learning Technology
RSA	RSA Examinations Board (formerly part of Royal Society of Arts) also Royal Society of Arts
RTO	Recognised Training Organisation (Northern Ireland)
SCAA	Schools Curriculum and Assessment Authority (now part of QCA)
SCET	Scottish Council for Educational Technology
SCOTVEC	Scottish Vocational Education Council (now part of SQA)
SCRE	Scottish Council for Research in Education
SME	Small/Medium-Sized Enterprise
SO	Scottish Office
SQA	Scottish Qualifications Authority
SVQ	Scottish Vocational Qualification
SWAP	Scottish Wider Access Programme
T&EA	Training and Employment Agency (Northern Ireland)
TEC	Training and Enterprise Council
TECNC	TECs National Council
TfT	Technologies for Training
TfW	Training for Work
TSC	Training Standards Council
TTA	Teacher Training Agency
TUC	Trades Union Congress
TVEI	Technical and Vocational Education Initiative
UFI/Ufi	University for Industry
WBTA	Work-based Training for Adults
WO	Welsh Office
YT	Youth Training
YTP	Youth Training Programme (Northern Ireland)
YTS	Youth Training Scheme (now replaced by YT)

Major organisations involved in providing or regulating vocational training

(Note: Some organisations do not have central fax and e-mail numbers)

BOLDU Ltd
The Learning Centre, 3 Farm Street, Hockley, Birmingham, B19 2TZ
tel: +44 (0)121 523 3199
fax: +44 (0)121 523 7010
e-mail: boldu@tft.co.uk

Confederation of British Industry (CBI)
Centre Point, 103 New Oxford Street, London WC1A 1DU.
tel: +44 (0)171 379 7400
fax: +44 (0)171 240 1578
e-mail: enquiry.desk@cbi.org.uk
website: www.cbi.org.uk

Department for Education and Employment (DfEE)
Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT
tel: +44 (0)171 925 5000
fax: +44 (0)171 925 6000
e-mail: info@dfee.gov.uk
website: www.open.gov.uk/dfee/dfeehome.htm

Department of Education for Northern Ireland (DENI)
Rathgael House, Balloo Road, Bangor, Co Down BT19 2PR
tel: +44 (0)1247 466311
e-mail: deni@nics.gov.uk
website: www.deni.gov.uk/index.htm

Further Education Development Agency (FEDA)
Citadel Place, Tinworth Street, London SE11 5EH
tel: +44 (0)171 840 5400
fax: +44 (0)171 840 5401
website: www.feda.ac.uk

Further Education Funding Council (FEFC)
Cheylesmore House, Quinton Road, Coventry CV1 2WT
tel: +44 (0)1203 863000
fax: +44 (0)1203 863100
website: www.fefc.ac.uk

Further Education Funding Council for Wales (FEFCW)
Lambourne House, Cardiff Business Park, Llanishen, Cardiff CF4 5GL
tel: +44 (0)1222 761861
tax: +44 (0)1222 763163
website: www.wfc.ac.uk/

Higher Education Funding Council (HEFC)
Northavon House, Coldharbour Lane, Bristol, BS16 1QD
tel: +44 (0)117 931 7317
fax: +44 (0)117 931 7203
e-mail: hefc@hefc.ac.uk
website: www.hefc.ac.uk

Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE)
Bridge House, 20 Bridge Street, Inverness IV1 1QR
tel: +44 (0)1463 234171
fax: +44 (0)1463 244469
e-mail: hie.general@hient.co.uk
website: www.hie.co.uk

National Advisory Council for Education and Training Targets (NACETT)
7th Floor, 222 Grays Inn Road, London SC1X 8HL
tel: +44 (0)171 211 5012
fax: +44 (0)171 211 4540

National Training Organisations National Council (NTONC)
10 Meadowcourt, Amos Road, Sheffield, S9 1BX
tel: +44 (0)114 261 9926
fax: +44 (0)114 261 8103
e-mail: —@nto-nc.org
website: www.nto-nc.org

Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA)
Newcombe House, 45 Notting Hill Gate, London W11 3JB
tel: +44 (0)171 229 1234
fax: +44 (0)171 509 6666
website: www.open.gov.uk/qca

Scottish Enterprise (SE)
120 Bothwell Street, Glasgow G2 7JP
tel: +44 (0)141 248 2700
fax: +44 (0)141 221 3217
e-mail: scotent.cse@scotent.co.uk
website: www.scotent.co.uk

Scottish Office (SO)
New St Andrew's House, St James Centre, Edinburgh EH1 3SY
tel: +44 (0)131 556 8400
website: www.scotland.gov.uk/

Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)
Hanover House, 24 Douglas Street, Glasgow G2 7NG
tel: +44 (0)141 248 7900
fax: +44 (0)141 242 2244
e-mail: e-mail@sqa.org.uk
website: www.sqa.org.uk

TEC National Council
Westminster Tower, 3 Albert Embankment, London SE1 7SX
tel: +44 (0)171 735 0010
fax: +44 (0)171 735 0090
e-mail: info@tec.co.uk
website: www.tec.co.uk

Trade Union Congress (TUC)
Congress House, Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3LS
tel: +44 (0)171 636 4030
fax: +44 (0)171 636 0632
e-mail: info@tuc.org.uk
website: www.tuc.org.uk

Training & Employment Agency (T&EA)
39-49 Adelaide Street, Belfast, BT2 8FD
tel: +44 (0)1232 257777
fax: +44 (0)1232 257778
website: www.tea/ni.org/

Training Standards Council (TSC)
Nash Court, John Smith Drive, Oxford Business Park, Oxford OX4 2PH
tel: +44 (0)1865 788700
fax: +44 (0)1865 778700
e-mail: enquiries@tsc.gov.uk
website: www.tsc.gov.uk

Ufi Ltd. (University for Industry)
The Innovation Centre
217 Portobello
Sheffield S1 4DP
tel.: +44 (0)114 224 2999
fax: +44 (0)114 270 0034
e-mail: enquiries@ufi.cwc.com
website: www.ufiltd.co.uk

Welsh Office (WO)
Cathays Park, Cardiff CF1 3NQ
tel: +44 (0)1222 825111
website: www.wales.gov.uk/

Annex 3

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Training Statistics 1996 ISBN 0 11 270959 1

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Office for National Statistics

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Social Trends 28: 1998: ISBN 0 11 620987 9

Office for Official Publications of the European Communities

Employment in Europe 1997

Regions Statistical Yearbook 1997: ISBN 92 828 2240 0

4. History

The Evolution of British Manpower Policy, from the Statute of Artificers 1563 to the Industrial Training Act 1964 by P.J.C. Perry: London 1976: ISBN 0 905675 00 2

Brief glossary of terms

The following brief list of terms and explanations on how they have been used in this report, has been drawn up by the author. It makes no claim to be an authoritative terminological work.

Access: Access, as used in the term Access to Higher Education, mainly involves bringing an individual to a standard which a higher education institution will accept for entry to a higher education course, providing an alternative to the traditional routes to HE (q.v.). It can also relate to demolishing or easing non-academic barriers, e.g. by designing higher education courses so that they can be taken by students with, say, family commitments.

Accreditation: In the sense used for National Vocational Qualifications, the formal act by which the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (formerly the National Council for Vocational Qualifications) simultaneously recognises statements of competence, awarding bodies, and qualifications for inclusion within the NVQ Framework.

Accreditation of Prior Learning: The process of checking what an individual has done in the past, whether in formal education or training or work or life experience, in order to provide recognition of this in the form of a qualification, part qualification or accelerated training leading to a qualification.

Assessment: Several different meanings can be given to assessment, but in this monograph it has been used to cover the measurement of attainment or performance or the process of collecting evidence and making judgements as to whether an individual has met the criteria for an award or part of an award.

Awarding Body: An organisation which awards a qualification (in the English sense). This could be an organisation (e.g. City & Guilds or the Business and Technology Education Council) which prescribes syllabuses and assessments over a wide range of subject areas. It could be a professional body whose qualifications are related to grades of membership.

Competence: There are many different definitions of competence, but in this monograph the definition used for NVQs has been adopted: the ability to perform in work roles or jobs to the standards required in employment.

Credit: Attainment in education or training which is short of a full qualification (q.v.) but counts towards one. See also 'Training credit'

Distance learning: see Open Learning

Further Education: Post-compulsory education which does not take place in a school (q.v.) but which is not higher education (q.v.). The Further Education Funding Councils are concerned with providing funding to corporate institutions which provide Further Education. The types of institution eligible to receive such funding are defined by law.

Flexible learning: see Open Learning

Green Paper: A consultative document published by government to obtain reactions to proposed policies.

Higher Education: Higher Education courses are 'those reaching standards above GCE A-level, SCE-H-grade and BTEC National Diploma or Certificate (or their equivalents)' (Source: *Education Statistics for the United Kingdom: 1991*). The same source states 'Entry to Higher Education depends mainly on gaining the appropriate entry qualification ....,' and cites GCE A level, BTEC National and Scottish H-grade as the main qualifications.

Most higher education courses lead to a first degree or higher degree. Those which are below degree standard include in the UK Dip. HE, BTEC and SCOTVEC Higher National Certificates and Diplomas and some professional qualifications. Other professional qualifications are considered to be of degree or post-graduate level.

Independent schools: (also known as Public Schools or Private Schools). Schools not funded by the state.

Maintained schools: Those schools in receipt of public funds.

Module: Used in this monograph to mean a self-contained or separately identified part of a course or qualification. The term 'module' has been used for the generality. The term 'unit' has been used in the specific sense defined by the then National Council for Vocational Qualifications: 'a primary sub-division of the competence required for the award of an NVQ, representing a basic aspect of competence having meaning in employment which may be recognised and certificated independently as a credit towards an award.'

Open learning: Open learning can be taken to mean any arrangement which opens up opportunities for people to learn, including opening institutions on days and at times when it is convenient for the learner, removing restrictive rules on entry to studies and on the process of studying, allowing students to start when they like and finish when they are ready (e.g. for examination), enabling study to take place at home.

In this monograph this opening of opportunities is referred to as **flexible learning**, while open learning is confined to learning which includes a large measure of self-study, usually based on packages which may be in print or multi-media and may or may not be supported by tutorials. **Distance learning** refers to situations in which geography prevents teacher and learner meeting regularly.

Outcomes: A focus on the attainment of an individual. Where there is a fixed length course, the outcomes of different individuals at the end of the course are likely to be different. If there is a focus on the outcomes, then the length of learning time to reach a stated outcome is likely to differ between individuals.

Output-related Funding: The principle of relating grants (eg from the government to TECs, from TECs to colleges and training centres) in part or in whole to the achievement of certain outcome targets, eg the numbers of NVQs obtained by students or trainees.

Profession: A high-level occupation which has standards, values and a code of conduct normally provided through membership of a professional body. Membership needs to be seen in terms of the key characteristics of professional occupations, identified by the Monopolies Commission in 1970, as:

a) they are required to be expert in a particular area of activity, for which an advanced and extended formation is necessary, and practice in which requires a high level of theoretical foundation;

b) they have custody of a clearly definable and valuable body of knowledge and understanding;

c) they accept responsibility and accountability for the decisions they make against recognised values and standards of conduct.

Qualification: The recognition, usually by the award of a certificate or diploma, that an individual has reached a predetermined standard.

In the UK,

- the preparation for a qualification
- the assessment of the standards reached by an individual
- the award of the qualification

are now seen as separate, both in logic and in fact. The same qualification may be awarded following different types of preparation (including the Accreditation of Prior Learning q.v.) and as a result of different types of assessment.

Royal Charter: A form of legal personality awarded by the Privy Council (a special, non-political Council, with defined powers) on behalf of the Queen.

School: An educational institution, not in the further or higher education sector, which provides one or more of:

- primary education,
- full-time secondary education suitable for pupils of compulsory school age,
- full-time education for those above compulsory school age and below the age of 19.

Trust: A form of legal personality, controlled by trustees who are not its owners.

Training credit: A voucher representing an entitlement to training, normally expressed as a sum of money which can only be spent on training.

White Paper: An official government publication outlining an area of policy and intentions. These usually require legislation for their implementation.

Unit: See module.

Further proposed changes to the VET infrastructure – June 1999

A government White Paper, *Learning to Succeed*, published on 30 June 1999, proposed major changes to the infrastructure and funding arrangements for post-16 education and training in England. A new Learning and Skills Council (LSC) will be created and be operational from 1 April 2001. The remit of LSC will include further education, community and adult learning, work-based training for young people, workforce development, and information, advice, guidance and support for adults.

The LSC will replace:

- FEFC (funding for FE sector colleges)
- TECs (government funded training and workforce development)
- local authorities (in respect of adult and community learning)
- NACETT (advising government on National Education and Training Targets).

It will also have some, as yet unconfirmed, responsibilities in relation to school sixth forms

The LSC will be responsible for a budget of about UK£ 5 billion (Euro 7.5 billion), and for the education and training opportunities of over 5 million young people and adults.

The Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) will become responsible for inspecting provision for 16-19 year olds in schools and in colleges. There will be a new independent inspectorate (presumably based on the FEFC and Training Standards Council inspectorates) for post-19 provision in colleges and for work-based provision for all age groups. The two inspectorates will plan a joint inspection programme for sixth form, FE and tertiary colleges.

Learning to Succeed also envisaged changes in the infrastructure for industrial training as well as for the management of further education.

The national Learning and Skills Council and some 50 local Learning and Skills Councils will take on most of the roles of TECs. The local councils will be responsible for raising standards and for securing provision to meet local learning and skills needs. In particular they will have local flexibility and discretion over:

- quality improvement
- building capacity within the market
- adult and community learning
- Education/Business Partnerships
- Investors in People
- discretionary funding to meet local needs.

Work-based learning for adults is to be transferred to the Employment Service and local delivery of services for small businesses will be through 40-50 sub-regional 'franchises' (rather than through the current 80 Business Link partnerships) on behalf of Department of Trade and Industry's Small Business Service. A consultation document on this service was also published on 30 June. Its three main tasks will be to:

- act as a voice for small business 'at the heart of government'
- simplify and improve the quality and coherence of government support for small businesses
- help small firms deal with regulation and ensure small firms' interests are properly considered in future regulation.

The White Paper states:........*in delivering workforce development services and programmes for example, the local Learning and Skills Council will arrange with the Small Business Service to provide a seamless service to small and medium sized businesses and to integrate skills development with enterprise and business competitiveness. This will include management development (including owner-management development), which is often the key to improving the performance of small firms. It will mean that Small Business Service staff will be the primary local point of contact with small firms for marketing of vocational training, Modern Apprenticeships, National Traineeships and Investors in People.*

A section of the White Paper is devoted to Local Learning Partnerships, which are seen as a major ingredient for successful implementation of the new structure. However, this is an inherently difficult arrangement. If the partnerships are inclusive they tend to be very large and difficult to manage coherently. If they are small enough to be useful, those organisations which are left out are likely to create difficulties.

John Twining
August 1999

CEDEFOP — European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training

Vocational education and training in the United Kingdom

John Twining
Guildford Educational Services

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